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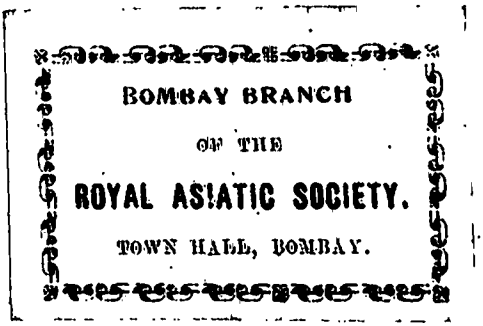

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A LUCKY YOUNG WOMAN.

BY

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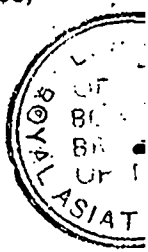

PRESS OPINIONS

"See, here are the adventures of a very charming lass."
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SOCIAL VICISSITUDES

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F. C. PHILIPS

AUTHOR OF

"AS IN A LOOKING-GLASS," "A LUCKY YOUNG WOMAN," ETC.

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LONDON

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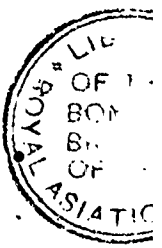

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"The pictures of life at Monte Carlo are very clever, and indeed the book is throughout exceedingly graphic; the book has a certain value as revealing the real condition, the opinions, and the life of a considerable section of the wealthy pleasure-loving world of the day."—*Pictorial World.*

"Unless Pope was a terrible libeller, which perhaps he was, every woman is at heart a rake. Mr. Philips does not prove the truth of his motto in the cunningly devised fable which bears the appropriate title 'As in a Looking-Glass;' but he certainly draws the reflection of an accomplished rake who is at the same time a very woman. . . . . Mr. Philips' story is a work of art, and, being much superior to the rough sketches of an average novelist, it discharges the true function of every work of art by representing things as they actually are, and teaching the observer to discriminate between appearances and realities."—*Saturday Review.*

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SOCIAL VICISSITUDES.

THE TIGER'S EYE.

COLONEL VANDELEUR was an officer who, on many occa-
ions, had done a good deal more than smell powder.
a mere boy, fresh from Eton, he went out straight
he Crimea, and got his first promotion for heading
ttle party of volunteers who captured a rifle-pit
from it turned the enemy's line by taking them in
k. This distinguished service had marked him out
early in his career, and he was one of those whose
rest at the Horse Guards had been strictly due to
nal merit, and not to private influence.
the time of our story he was still in the prime of
apable of any amount of hardship and fatigue, a
sportsman, and, among men at any rate, a universal
rite. Nor were his good looks spoiled in any way
s glass eye. Some sand, thrown up by a Russian
which had burst in the trenches, had struck him

in the face, and his right eye had to be sacrificed. In its place he carried an eye of glass, which was perfectly well matched, and almost defied detection, his own features being, as a rule, if not exactly stolid, certainly very far from vivacious.

He had made but one mistake in life. At the age of forty-five he had married a girl of eighteen, and he was now playing Hercules to her Omphale, and the veriest slave of her caprices, down to the slightest detail. The match had been a matter of regret to all his friends, many of whom had found that the young wife's intolerable self-assertion and petulance made it almost impossible for them any longer [illegible] see their old comrade, except on rare occasions at [illegible] club.

Now, it so happened that the Colonel and his [illegible] were staying at the Bedford Hotel at Brighton, [illegible] that Sir Greville Sykes was also fixed in quarter[illegible] the Old Ship. Vandeleur and Sykes had known [illegible] other for some years, and so it was only natural [illegible] the Vandeleurs coming across Sykes at Mutton's sl[illegible] ask him to dinner, and afterwards see a good de[illegible] him, and that they should make up between them, [illegible] or less, a little party of three.

A stroke of luck had befallen Vandeleur. A[illegible] uncle, a retired chief clerk in Chancery, had [illegible] suddenly, leaving him all his money. Ninet[illegible]

thousand pounds is a very comfortable sum. The sooner you get it out of the hands of the lawyers and into your own, the better. So Vandeleur was always hurrying up to London, and, as he expressed it, pegging away at the musty old dullards of Lincoln's Inn Fields.

One day he had a downright explosion with the second partner of the eminent firm of Tail, Tail, Remainder, and Tail, and had even gone the length of threatening to transfer his business to the younger and quicker hands of Messrs. Shortcroft and Raid. This so terrified the man of tape, that he not only promised to wind the whole business up in a fortnight, but actually suggested a cheque for a couple of thousand pounds for any little immediate needs, and, what is more, drew the document and signed it.

"This is jolly," said Vandeleur to himself. "It is now only twelve, and I can easily be back for dinner."

So first he drove up to the bank and cashed the cheque; then he paid the bulk of the money into his own bank; and then he had some sherry and a caviare sandwich at the Rag. Next he strolled up into Bond Street and made some purchases—some gloves, a bracelet, and a sunshade—for his wife, together with a most charming silver chatelaine. And for himself, half a dozen boxes of cigars, and a walking-stick to which

he took a fancy. Then he returned to his club to lunch.

Being much encumbered with the dust of travel, he set to work about his ablutions in earnest, and before commencing them removed his glass eye. It somehow slipped through his fingers, fell with a crash on the stone floor, and splintered into a thousand fragments.

Now, it is not so easy, as Vandeleur knew, to get a glass eye at a minute's notice. You must devote a morning to the carrying out of such a matter, and have your own eye very carefully matched. It is as troublesome an undertaking as a visit to your dentist. So he resolved to make a second visit to London next week, and bring up his wife, with *carte blanche* to ransack Bond Street and Regent Street on her own account. Meantime, he hurried round to the eminent taxidermist who had always set up all his big game for him, and explained his position.

"I don't want to go down to Brighton with a green patch, you know," he observed. "What can you do for me?"

"We don't keep human eyes, sir. You should go to an optician's or a surgical instrument maker's."

"So I will when I am next in town, or will come up on purpose to do it. But I've only twenty minutes in which to catch my train, so you must fix me up somehow."

The shopman hesitated, but at last produced a box with trays full of eyes of every kind. One was at last selected which fitted fairly well.

"It will do," said the Colonel, as he looked at himself in the glass. "At all events it is better than nothing. What beast was it meant for?"

"A tiger, sir."

The Colonel laughed as he took his change. "Begad, I ought to have known it," said he, "without being told! If any one knows a tiger's eye, it's your humble servant. I've shot them, ah! by the score, the brutes."

The shopman thought his customer was bouncing, and was just about to giggle, when he suddenly looked at the Colonel, seemed to catch an awkward expression in his features, and recovered himself abruptly.

Away rattled Vandeleur in a quick hansom to Victoria. "Drive sharp!" he said. When deposited at the station, he tendered the Jehu his legal fare. The fellow looked at it in disgust. "Why, what's this?" he was beginning, when he suddenly seemed to think better of it. "Beg your pardon, sir; I was a-thinking it was from Camberwell." And he clambered into his seat, and went meditatively away.

"I'd as soon drive the devil hisself," he said, when he joined his friends upon the rank. "It was awful. Talk of Mr. Newfield! He can look at you and reckon you up, he can. But no beak in London's in it with

this cove. 'Six months,' I 'eard 'im say. Leastways I 'eard 'im look it. That's to say, I see 'im look it."

Innocent of all this, the Colonel purchased an assortment of papers and seated himself in a carriage. It was a very odd thing, he thought. Actually a lady who was in the same compartment whispered something to her husband in a state of great excitement. The guard was summoned, and they transferred themselves to another carriage. "A curious business," said the Colonel; "they can't take me for the ghost of Lefroy." Then the train started, and he settled down to his papers.

From the station he drove to the Bedford, telling the porter to bring up his packages. His wife was seated in the window, busied with Ouida's latest effort of imagination. She jumped up and came to meet him.

"I was wondering when you would return," she said. "I thought perhaps you might stop and dine at your club, and come down by the last train, or perhaps to-morrow morning."

"Why should you think that?" he asked, not at all unnaturally. It was annoying, when he had come down with a lot of presents for her, that she should not be more cordial in her welcome.

She looked at her husband for a moment, made a step towards him, then turned round, threw herself upon the sofa, and burst into tears.

"Oh, don't kill me! Don't kill me! I've been dreadfully wicked, horribly wicked, but don't kill me!"

* * * * *

Colonel Vandeleur went back to town that night by the late express, and took up his quarters at an hotel in Jermyn Street much frequented by him in his bachelor days. Next morning he received a short letter from his wife, which was at once incoherent and yet explicit. Also it was truthful, which her letters, as a rule, were not.

He meditated a good deal and went round to Lincoln's Inn Fields. Then he went to the club, hunted out an old friend, and took him to dinner. They dined *tête-à-tête* in a private room, and sat talking until very small hours in the morning. The consultation over at last, the Colonel wrote a letter, and a confidential clerk from the office of his solicitors took it down next morning to Brighton to make sure of personal delivery.

"At my time of life I am averse to a scandal, nor have I any wish to marry again. I have no secrets and no attachment or even an ordinary entanglement that I have hidden from you. Your position will not be affected. Your settlements will remain as they are. But I impose one condition on you. You will have to live at Southwold, whether you like the place or not, and I forbid you to leave it even for a day, except by

the written orders of my doctor, who will at any time come down from London to see you.

"I may also tell you that your movements will be duly and regularly reported to me. A day will be enough for you to make your arrangements. On any business matter, however small, you may write to my solicitors.

"There is thus nothing that need trouble you. For myself, I am leaving England, and have no fixed plans. If you write to me, I shall refer the letter to my solicitors, so that you may spare yourself all attempts to shake an irrevocable determination. Were you not a Protestant, I should advise you to go into a convent. As it is, I have done the next best thing for you.

"CHARLES VANDELEUR."

* * * * *

Mrs. Vandeleur is much respected at Southwold, where the curates and the old maids compare her troubles and sorrows to those of poor dear Lady Byron. She is very charitable and immensely energetic, and on minor points of parish administration the Rector defers to her.

Colonel Vandeleur himself is yachting and shooting, not extravagantly at all, but in true sportsmanlike fashion. His hair is grizzled, but he is still as erect as a dart, and, as his friends profanely put it, with covert allusion to the two principal misfortunes of his life, "his eye is not dim, nor his natural force abated."

ROYAL RECOGNITION.

From "The Grand" Prance, on tour, to H.R.H. the Prince of Mona, K.G., on board the Yacht "Alicia," Cowes, I. of W.

HEADQUARTERS "MERRIMENT ARMY,"
THEATRE ROYAL, RYDE, I. OF W.,
August 7, 1882.

SIR,—In the first place, I humbly beg to assure your Royal Highness of the feelings of respect and devotion with which I venture to address your Royal Highness. Secondly, I have the honour to inform your Royal Highness that I have just taken up a strong position here, with a small but admirably equipped and well-drilled army, which is ready and willing at the word of command to march to the assault of any number of hearts, even at the risk of encountering the bursting of laughter, the file-firing of applause, or the volley of encores. Thirdly, I am compelled by my responsible position to respectfully *warn* your Royal Highness that, on the *slightest* intimation of your Royal Highness's intention to enter into an engagement with me and the troops

which I have the honour of commanding, I shall (without further notice) attack the *Alicïa* in force, board her, and (if possible) carry her by storm and kill all aboard with my new coruscations of wit.

I am, Sir, with the deepest respect,

Your Royal Highness's

Most devoted and obedient Servant,

ARTHUR GRINWELL PRANCE,
General Commanding-in-Chief.

From H.R.H. the Prince of Mona, to "The Grand" Prance, Theatre Royal, Ryde.

YACHT "ALICIA," COWES, *Tuesday.*

The Prince of Mona has received General Prance's *ultimatum*, and, in reply, begs to assure him that he is perfectly ready to engage the "Merriment Army" at 9 P.M. to-morrow. At the same time the Prince considers it only right to inform General Prance that he will have to encounter, not only the whole of the *Alicia's* available forces, but also an appreciable contingent which the Prince has impressed from other ships now in harbour. The Prince can promise the General a "warm" reception.

From Lady Goldmine, Steam Yacht "Pomposo," Cowes, to the Hon. Mrs. Bluesang, Yacht "Alicia," Cowes.

August 8.

MY DEAR MRS. BLUESANG,—You will be glad to hear that we are *aboard* the dear *Pomposo at last.* Sir Crœsus *insisted* on staying in town till this morning, owing to that tiresome Egyptian business, and I positively *dreaded* the arrival of the post. He was quite capable of giving up the regatta-week altogether, and I couldn't very well *commission* the *Pomposo* without him, could I, dear? You see I am quite a sailor already. I suppose it is the result of being on salt water, though we are safe at anchor *now,* and sleep on shore, *of course.* But I am forgetting the object of my letter. Will you lunch with us to-morrow, at 1.30, *aboard?* I'm afraid you won't get anything much better than an able seaman's *rations* ("junk" and "six-water grog," perhaps, though what that is I don't know, "jolly tar" though I am), but I'm sure you won't mind "roughing it" for once. Our own party is only ten or twelve, and I have not sent out many cards, so we shall be quite "*en famille.*"

R.S.V.P. by the pinnace. I was just going to put "bearer"!

Ever yours,

ANGELINA GOLDMINE.

P.S.—I have just heard, *by the merest chance*, that "The Grand" Prance is to sing to the Prince to-morrow night. I hear he is *excruciatingly* funny. I do so *long* to hear him. Of course, I have never had the chance. I *have* been taken *once*, with a deep veil on, to the Eldorado; but the Corinthian Saloon and the Alcazar are, alas! impossible. And to think that a *word* from you to the sweet Princess would enable me to hear Prance! And aboard the *Alicia*, too!

From the Hon. Mrs. Bluesang to Lady Goldmine.

YACHT "ALICIA," *August* 8, 1882.

DEAR LADY GOLDMINE,—I am sorry to be unable to accept your kind invitation to lunch, as just at present my time is not my own. A few intimate friends of the Prince dine on board to-morrow; and there is, I believe, to be a little music on deck afterwards. Beyond this, I know nothing about H.R.H.'s arrangements.

Very truly yours,

ETHEL BLUESANG.

From Orlando Kean Macready Kemble Fitz-Ranter, of the Theatre Royal, Portsmouth, to H.R.H. the Prince of Mona, K.G., on board the Yacht "Alicia," Cowes, Isle of Wight.

August 10, 1882.

May it please your Royal Highness,

SIR,—It has come to my ears, through sources which I deem to be sufficiently trustworthy, that, but yester-e'en, a person calling himself "The Grand" Prance had the inestimable honour of going through his *performance* before your Royal Highness and a distinguished circle of your Royal Highness's "most familiar friends." Although, owing to the underhand machinations of a cowardly clique, I have as yet been debarred from the privilege of appearing before your Royal Highness on the boards of "Old Drury," the nightly and enthusiastic approbation of an appreciative although provincial audience, and the many laudatory critiques which I herewith am bold to enclose, encourage me to hope that your Royal Highness, in your capacity of the most august as well as most enlightened patron of the drama whom old England can boast, will deign to command the attendance of the most humble of "Her Majesty's Servants" on board the *Alicia*, when he will do his utmost to prove that there are still professors of the histrionic art among us capable of

interpreting the mind of the Divine Bard, although they may not be assisted by unlimited capital or gifted with an indistinct utterance and a shambling gait.

I am, Sir, &c. &c. &c.,

ORLANDO KEAN MACREADY KEMBLE FITZ-RANTER.

P.S.—I may add that my motives in addressing your Royal Highness are *entirely disinterested.* I should not *dream* of making any charge, however small, for my humble services.

From A. Manuensis, Esq., Private Secretary to the Prince of Mona, to O. K. M. K. Fitz-Ranter, Esq.

YACHT "ALICIA," *August* 10, 1882.

SIR,—I am commanded by H.R.H. the Prince of Mona to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. H.R.H. has no occasion for the services you are good enough to offer.

I am, Sir, &c. &c.,

A. MANUENSIS.

From Sir Simon Loborn, Bart., Yacht "Nouvelor," Ryde, to the Viscountess Cheltenham, Gardenia Cottage, Cowes.

August 8, 1882.

MY DEAR LADY CHELTENHAM,—You went into such

fits of laughter when we had our little conversation at the garden party yesterday that I am afraid you thought I was joking. It certainly *is* laughable that a man of my means should anticipate any difficulty in being elected to the R.Y.S. But, then, you see, the old fogies who work the oracle there knew my father, who, I am ashamed to say, *was* once a navvy, and they can't forget it, although I have done everything that a lavish expenditure *can* do to efface the stigma upon our escutcheon.

Now, I have set my mind upon getting into the R.Y.S. and I don't care what it costs me. I have been duly presented to the Prince of Mona, and have met him once or twice in a friendly way at garden-parties and smoking concerts.

So, you see that, if my name happened to crop up in your next conversation with H.R.H., and you happened to say that a man who owns a steam yacht of 700 tons, a schooner of 300, and a 20-ton cutter (besides being real good company) *ought* to belong to the Squadron, it is very likely that H.R.H. might back me at the election next week. No one, however austere, could refuse *you* anything, I am sure; not even if you were to tell a fellow that life was very expensive, and duns very troublesome, and a friend's help very welcome. I know *I* should be too happy to receive any such confidence from Lady C., and to prove

myself worthy of it by prompt action and strict secrecy.

Yours always sincerely,

SIMON LOBORN.

From Lady Cheltenham to Sir Simon Loborn, Bart.

GARDENIA COTTAGE, COWES, *August* 9, 1882.

DEAR SIR SIMON,—Your *too* funny letter was handed to me just as my husband and I were embarking for the *Alicia*. Of course, I took it as it was meant—one of your amusing practical jokes—and laughed so much all the way that Lord Cheltenham (from whom, of course, I have *no* secret) insisted on sharing the fun. Well, he laughed a good deal, and then showed it to the Prince, who also laughed a good deal. But they both agreed that the Squadron was too "fogey" for a person of your infinite humour. And then they made me read it aloud, and we all roared with laughter. You will be glad to hear that the Princess was particularly amused, and suggested that you should take it to the Mediterranean Fleet, and make them all laugh out there. I am still laughing, so that I can hardly hold my pen.

Yours, in fits,

BLANCHE CHELTENHAM.

P.S.—You will be pleased to know that my husband is still *quite* able to continue my pittance of £5000 a year.

From Hercules Q. Goahed, Yacht "Pride of Columbia," Cowes, to H.R.H. the Prince of Mona, K.G.

August 8, 1882.

SIR,—Some twenty years ago you were riding out with a party in the environs of New York. You stopped a few miles from the city and allowed a shabby young man to hold your horse while you got down to take a look round at the prospect. You kind of took to that young man's face; and when he told you he was walking to New York to make his fortune, you gave him a silver dollar. That shabby young man marked it, and invested it on condition that the identical coin should be handed back to him if successful. He was. He has kept that dollar ever since. It is now mounted in diamonds, and will descend to his family as an heirloom.

I am that shabby young man; and your dollar has brought me millions. That is, *your* dollar, *my* brains, and *God's* blessing.

Now, I feel sort of nervous writing to a future Emperor and King. I'm not posted in the etiquette of the British Court. But I want you, more'n I ever wanted anything, to visit your Dollar, where it hangs in my state cabin. If I could see you there, and shake you by the hand, and look at that Dollar meantime, it would make me happy.

If it can't be done, I should value the *cartes* of yourself, your consort, and your children. You are a great prince, and I am a plain man. But there can't be any much harm in my saying, "God bless you!"

HERCULES Q. GOAHED.

From the Prince of Mona to Hercules Q. Goahed, Esq.

YACHT "ALICIA," *Tuesday Evening.*

The Prince of Mona has received Mr. Goahed's letter with much satisfaction. He encloses the latest photographs of himself, the Princess, and his sons and daughters. The Prince will be happy to visit *the* Dollar to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock.

Notice Board at R.Y.S. Castle, Cowes.

HONORARY MEMBER.

Hercules Q. Goahed, Esq., New York Yacht Club, schooner yacht *Pride of Columbia.*

Proposed by H.R.H. the Commodore.

Seconded by Lord Cheltenham.

NATURAL JURISPRUDENCE.

SCENE.—*The principal bedroom of* MR. JUSTICE GRIPPER'S *villa at Esher. Time,* 2 A.M. *His lordship is discovered in bed, snoring the sleep of the just. He is roused by the entry of* MR. WILLIAM SIKES.

MR. JUSTICE GRIPPER (*starting up in bed*). Hullo! Who's there?

MR. WILLIAM SIKES (*cheerfully*). Only me, guv'nor.

MR. J. G. And who the devil are you, sir?

MR. W. S. You'll know soon enough, guv'nor. (*Sits down in an easy-chair.*) My name's Sikes—William Sikes of Hoxton. Your lordship knows me and I know you. You keep quiet and civil for once in your life, and you're all right. Ah! ring the bell, would ye? Try that again, and I'll crack your old head with the water-jug!

MR. J. G. (*livid with indignation*). Leave the room, sir!

MR. W. S. (*pleasantly*). Ah, you always used to like to get rid o' me in a hurry. No; I ain't going to leave the room, and it's no good your calling your servants.

Two of them are jugged in the cellar, the t'other's in the swim. And the women-folk are in bed with the sheets over their heads. Fust of all, let's make ourselves comfortable. You're a good judge of a cigar, you are. (*Extracts a choice regalia from his pocket, lights it, and mixes himself a stiff glass from a spirit-case on the table.*) Now, look here, you old pig, do you know me now? You've had me to rights once or twice; it's my turn now.

MR. J. G. You will pay for this, sir! I never forget a face.

MR. W. S. Don't you? Now, take care; none of your wiolent language. You've more to thank me for than you know of. I've two pals with me in this job. You gave one of 'em four-and-twenty not so long ago, and he wanted us to tie you up to the bedpost, shove a towel in your old mouth, and give you four dozen. He'd a-done it if I hadn't stopped him. I says, "No," I says, "no unnecessary wiolence; his lordship 'ull do what's right and square. Let's act judicial," says I.

MR. J. G. You insolent blackguard! Not so long ago you would all have swung for this.

MR. W. S. (*with a broad grin*). That job would a-suited you, my lord. Don't I see you at it, rolling it out, "place from whence you came, proper place of execution," all the rest of it! I've heard you never take to your dinner so kindly as after a good hanging

match. *You* a judge! Ugh! What was her blessed Majesty about? (*Assumes an expression of intense disgust, and expectorates freely.*)

MR. J. G. I will not bandy words with you, you ruffian. Take what you want, and leave me.

MR. W. S. Easy does it, guv'nor. I'm a-going to 'ave a little talk to you—improve the shining hour, you know; and if you ain't civil, blowed if I don't pass the word, and we'll see how you like a dozen or so. Lord, I wonder at my own meekness, I do. But there, always was tender-hearted. (*Changes suddenly from banter to ferocity*) Look here, you bald-headed old viper, 'ow long have you been a judge? What! you won't answer? (*rises threateningly from his chair*).

MR. J. G. (*with an effort*). Nine years.

MR. W. S. (*producing a piece of rope, and tying knots in it abstractedly*). Yes, and you took to the work natural. You've never missed hanging your dozen a year; and as for the stretches you've ladled out. if you was to add them together, Methoosalum 'ud never see through it. I've a good mind to give you a dozen, I have. (*Swings the rope meditatively.*) Ain't yer ashamed of yourself, you vindictive old sneak? (*Pause and silence, during which* MR. SIKES *mixes some more brandy-and-water.*)

MR. W. S. (*continuing*). And *you*, too! *you* putting down crime! Why (*with intense disgust*), there wasn't

a bigger rip than you about town, and I believe there ain't now. I know yer. I was in that little job at Brompton, I was—Linden Lodge. Yes, I see you remember. You was Mr. Serjeant Gripper then, and I owed you one, young as I was; and so, when we'd collared the swag, I stuck all your papers on the fire. Weren't you in a stew next day in court?

MR. J. G. (*viciously*). That was you, was it, you dog?

MR. W. S. (*slapping his leg*). Yes, guv'nor; and 'ere we are again. (*Laughs.*) Well, I never see a judge in a nightcap before. (*Thoughtfully*) I should like to see it drawed a little lower down, and this 'ere bit o' rope below it. (*With sudden ferocity*) You hung my own uncle, you did, you old butcher! a better man than you any day. His wife and children was fond of him, and that's more than you can say. And then you talked so precious big about gambling being the root of all evil. Why, I'm told you play higher than any of the nobs in your lot, and I seen yer with my own eyes planking it down in fifties on the cloth at Doncaster. Ugh! I'd like to make yer get the proclamation agin wice and immorality by heart, like the kids do their Catechism!

MR. J. G. Have you finished, sir?

MR. W. S. I soon shall, my pippin. The best o' the swag's in the cart by this time. That's a nice watch o' yours (*rising*).

MR. J. G. (*with something like real dignity*). Leave that watch, you scoundrel!

MR. W. S. (*opening the case*). Giv you by Lady Gripper. Ha! Well, I carn't 'elp it, although yer feelings does yer credit. You turned my uncle off, you know. (*Attaches the watch to his waistcoat.*) Studs—ah! and links. Now, just take off them rings, becos, if I have to help yer, I might hurt yer. (*Looks about the room, restores its contents to the dressing-bag, and snaps the lock.*) I think that's all; them candlesticks are only plated. I don't want yer lordship's letters (*examining* MR. JUSTICE GRIPPER'S *coat*). Yer ain't so much cash about yer as I could a-wished. Hows'ever (*pocketing money and notes*), every little helps. This yere's good gold, I'll lay (*taking up set of artificial teeth*). You'll miss these yere over your toast this morning. Well, I must be a-going.

MR. J. G. (*retaining composure with great effort*). You shall pay for this yet, you impudent villain!

MR. W. S. (*menacingly*). Now, you just stow that bad language, 'cos I won't have it—not even from a judge. And you look 'ere (*composes his face into an expression of mock judicial solemnity*), Joseph Gripper, you're a man of desperate character. You're a bald-headed old sinner. You've gambled and you've rushed enough for a dozen. Yer never did a good turn to anybody in your life; and yer never will. There ain't a soul who

knows you who don't wish you was dead. There's some of the judges (*shaking his head profoundly*)—your companions in guilt—as try to be gentlemen in so far as their 'orrible course of life allows of it. You've never tried to be a gentleman—it ain't in yer. How you came to be a judge I don't know. If you had your rights, you'd be doing time. Don't get purple in the face, and don't shake your fist at the Court, or the Court'll be shaking its fist at you. Lord! I've heard you so often, I can do the trick quite natural. Let to-night be a warning to you for the rest of your sinful old life, and be thankful the Court hasn't given yer that three dozen. (*Here* MR. SIKES *lights a farewell cigar and becomes grave.*) Look you here, Mr. Justice Gripper. When I was a boy, your father gave me a month for stealing apples. I wasn't twelve. I picked up in the Jug with a lot of fellows as was bigger than myself. When I came out, what was I to do? Nobody 'ud have a word to say to me. Then you prosecuted me at Quarter Sessions, and made it as hot as ever you could for me. Larceny of a coat it was, and I got eighteen months. Next time I see yer you was Recorder, and next time I see yer you was at the Old Bailey. I'm a thief, I know I am; but strike me blind if I ain't a better man than you are! I ain't so mean, I ain't so greedy, I ain't so spiteful and wenemous, and I ain't such a liar: I'd scorn it. Now, I'm going to

lock yer in, and I hope afore you die you'll have a wisit from my poor uncle's ghost, as you made so many jokes over. I see you a-grinning now, you old wolf. (*Casts his eye round the room.*) Nothing more. If you dare to make any noise or to open your mouth for the next ten minutes, I'll come back and stop it for you for once and for all. (*Blows out the candle, shuts the door after him, locks it on the outside, and descends the stairs.*)

The reflections of Mr. Justice Gripper are for some time not marked by that lucidity, logical precision, and exactitude, nor have his ejaculations that dignity and felicitude of expression, upon which he has so often been complimented by the public press.

THE LITTLE MENAGE IN SOUTH STREET.

GEORGE FAIRHOLME was the third son of a rector in the shires, whose income allowed him to send his sons one after the other to a public school, and then to the university. These two stages concluded, the worthy rector used to tell each boy in his turn that he had now got his start in life and must shift for himself.

This they all somehow managed to do. The knowledge of the Rev. Mr. Fairholme was limited. He had forgotten all the Greek and Latin he ever knew, and he had never in his life learnt anything else beyond the minimum of theology required for ordination, at a time when bishops were lax, and when a duke was heard to declare, confirming his ducal word with his ducal oath, that he would have his negro footman ordained the next day if he chose, and offered to bet heavily on the event.

The history of the first son, who was in a marching regiment, and of the second, who was in the navy, need not concern us. The third, through the interest of the

member for the county, got a nomination to the Foreign Office, the clerks in which have chances of better things, and with a little luck occasionally get them. He was looking out, when our story commences, for a stroke of luck of this kind—a paid attaché-ship, or something of that sort—and by way of improving his prospects generally in that direction, or indeed in any other, he decided to make a prudent marriage. Accordingly, Miss Constance Thorndyke, daughter of Lord Eustace Thorndyke, fourth brother of the Duke of Surrey, became Mrs. George Fairholme.

Her father, on her wedding-day, gave Mrs. George, with tears in his eyes, a pearl and ruby locket. In it was a cheque for £500, the half of the sum which the devoted parent had extracted from his eldest brother for the specific purpose of dowry in ready money.

Now, the expenses of a honeymoon on the Continent and many other things incidental to a marriage in good society, such as lockets for the bridesmaids, make a hole in five hundred pounds, and when George Fairholme returned from his honeymoon at Nice, he found that he had difficulties to face which may be briefly thus enumerated.

His pay in the Foreign Office was exactly three hundred a year, less income-tax, to which he could add about three or four hundred a year more, which he had to work very hard to make up. In the first place, he

belonged to one or two clubs, and he played a remarkably good game of whist. He also betted judiciously. Pray let it not be supposed that there was ever a question about this, even amongst his enemies. Any man who had breathed a word against his honour would have been laughed at. It has been said that the University Boat-race is the one rowing event that has never been sold, and, consequently, the public puts on its money with confidence, from Crœsus who follows it in his launch, down to the costermonger who invests his dollar and trudges down to Putney on foot. Now, Fairholme's play was as much above suspicion as the University Boat-race itself. He also wrote a little, and perhaps, one way and another, his whole income ranged from seven to eight hundred a year.

Let us take the *per contra* account. As a bachelor, he had lived in very comfortable lodgings in Ryder Street. He now had to pay for a small house in South Street, Park Lane, and to keep three maidservants. His wife needed a hired brougham. He could not take her out to dinner in a four-wheeled cab, and it would have been fatal to his chances to have given up society.

Going out to dinner involves giving dinners, and there are other expenses incidental to Mayfair; for it costs a man with a house far more to dine at home *tête-à-tête* with his wife than it would, if he had the

requisite moral courage, to boldly take her to a restaurant, and there share with her a dinner of the same quality.

Then, too, there was his wife's pin-money, and there were rates and taxes and other things of which a bachelor in lodgings knows nothing. The quarterly coal-bill when presented in February is an item to make a man groan, even if his cook does not receive a commission on it from the coal-merchant, and Fairholme began to think that his wife must be a wonderful manager. She never exceeded her allowance, or wanted a cheque in advance, or told him of a troublesome bill which she had overlooked; and yet they lived in as good style as did friends of his with three or four times his income.

An end to his happiness—a very sudden and sad one—came at last. His wife had been with him to a quasi-state ball given by the Russian Ambassador. Within a week about a hundred of the ladies who had been present were seized with typhoid fever. The *Lancet* took the matter up, and there was an investigation. As there is nothing like accuracy in science, we give its result. It was a scientific "house that Jack built." These ladies had all refreshed themselves with some vanilla cream. The milk in this cream was traced to the dairy in Daleshire which had supplied it.

This was a dairy constructed on sanitary principles, and visited weekly by a medical inspector, who had overlooked the fact that the water supplied to the cows came from a well which ought to have been closed some years back, and securely bricked over, as the whole sewage of the farm leaked pleasantly into it.

Among those who were stricken down, and whose case was hopeless from the first, was Mrs. Fairholme.

Her husband returned from the funeral looking as he had looked for many days, at least ten years older. The servants instinctively avoided him. The blinds were drawn up, and he wandered moodily about the house like a caged panther.

There were his wife's little tropical birds in their gilded cage. There was her fernery with its green frogs and speckled lizards; her piano, her writing-case, her picture on the wall—everywhere something to remind him of her, down even to the little silver ink-stand she had given him on his last birthday. He had never been able, poor fellow, to afford her jewellery, beyond some little trifle such as a locket or inexpensive bracelet on New Year's Day, or on some other such occasion. But, like a good and economical wife, she had hired her jewellery for the evening, or when she attended a drawing-room, from Messrs. Polonius, of Bond Street. This, she explained to him, was a practice as common as to hire a brougham, and Messrs. Polonius,

with whom her family had dealt for years, would always let her have the same articles over again if she gave a few days' notice, so that, as she used laughingly to say, her friends quite believed them to be her own, and could hardly conceal their envy.

"I am a clever little wife, dearest, am I not?" she would say, as she put up her face to be kissed before he took her out to some dinner or ball. "Don't be afraid. I won't drop this pendant. Why"—and here she would clap her little hands—"it would cost my darling nearly a year's income."

From the drawing-room he wandered upstairs. He was going to leave that night, and bury himself for a month in Brittany. He went into his dressing-room for a few odd things, and then took a look round the bedroom. Suddenly a thought struck him, and he rang the bell. It was answered by the housemaid.

"Send Mary to me," he said shortly. Now, Mary had been in the family in a double capacity. She waited at table and acted as Mrs. Fairholme's maid.

"Mary," he said, "I want the key of the wardrobe." He could not bring himself to mention his wife, even indirectly. "There are some things there which I must take back to Mr. Polonius before I go away to-night. I would rather not have them left in the house."

Mary turned round to hunt for the key, but her face became very pale.

"You have been sitting up lately," he said, as she found the key and brought it him. "You may go to-night to your people in the country. When I return, I fear you must find another place. Where is the jewellery?"

Mary, paler than ever, pointed out a large Russian leather jewel-case, found him the key of it, and fairly burst into tears.

"They are all from Mr. Polonius?" he asked.

"All, sir," sobbed Mary. "Poor dear mistress never went anywhere else."

And so, with his own valise and with the case of jewellery, Fairholme drove straight to the emporium of that prince among diamond merchants, and strode into the shop.

"This," said he to the junior partner, who met him on the mat, "is the jewellery Mrs. Fairholme hired of you. I wish you to check it and give me a receipt. You may send in your account at once."

The man looked bewildered, but he said nothing. He took the key Fairholme handed him, and opened the box, remarking—for he could see Fairholme's deep mourning—that it was a fine day, an observation he seemed to think might prove inspiriting.

"Not ours, sir," he said, as he opened the first morocco case—a necklace of diamonds and pearls. "These," and he pointed to the name on the white satin inside

the lid, "are from Messrs. Triplet. Nor these either; nor yet these. I do not see anything of ours, sir, as yet."

Evidently bewildered, the man lifted the upper tray. Under it were letters. Then, without moving a muscle of his face, he was about to replace the tray, when Fairholme stopped him, took out the letters hurriedly, and begged him to make them up into a small parcel. This task the man accomplished, and Fairholme left the shop with the case in his hand and the letters in his pocket.

When he had gone, the junior partner allowed his features to relax into a curious kind of smile.

The jewels were left at his bankers', sealed up. There were yet two hours for his train from Victoria. So he turned into the Marlborough, sat down at a table by the window, and ordered some brandy. He seldom or never touched brandy, so now it settled his nerves, and in a mechanical way he opened the packet.

The letters in it told their own story. The jewellery had *not* been hired from Mr. Polonius, nor indeed from anybody else. Every article that he had left at the bankers' had its own little packet of letters.

I hold that George Fairholme was doing nothing dishonourable in this, though I need not discuss the casuistry of the matter. He began with a letter from the Duke of Radnor. The coronet and crest struck

him, as he had not the honour of the Duke's acquaintance, so he opened the letter and read it. Then he read one or two of the others. Then he made a parcel of the lot, which he carefully sealed up, and so left the club.

There was still an hour to catch his train, so he had time to buy a despatch-box for the letters. He also provided himself with cigars and a few other things of which a widower does not usually think on the day of his wife's funeral. And then he drove to Victoria. Here it became apparent that he had changed his plans. Anyhow, he abandoned the idea of Brittany and took a ticket to Paris, which he reached soon after six the next morning.

He devoted the day to writing letters, mostly on business. He instructed his solicitors to arrange for the sale of the lease of the little house in South Street, with all its effects if possible, except a few of his own which he specified. He also wrote a short and carefully considered letter to Lord Eustace Thorndyke, and another to the chief of his department at the Foreign Office, mentioning that he should probably apply for a fortnight's further leave of absence than he had obtained. This took time, but he did not seem to feel tired, although he had been many hours without sleep.

He posted his letters himself, and then dined at the Café Anglais. No man ever selected a dinner more

carefully, or drank his champagne more deliberately or with greater appreciation.

His dinner finished, he lit a cigar, then drove to the Variétés. Judic played that night in one of her most characteristic parts. The play was "Niniche." No one laughed at it more heartily than did George Fairholme. The play over, he strolled into Bignon's, and concluded the day with a supper of the kind which has made that establishment famous throughout Europe.

THE CHURCH AND THE STAGE.

SCENE.—*The Château d'Arques, near Dieppe. The* ARCHBISHOP OF LANCASTER *is discovered inspecting the ruins with the aid of his "Baedeker." Turning a corner, he comes suddenly upon* MR. NASH, *of Nash's Theatre.*

A. OF L. Delighted to meet you again, sir. I hope we shall again be near each other to-night at the *table d'hôte*. Allow me to say that I was much impressed with your remarks on the policy of the Government. It seems to me that Mr. Gladstone sadly needs discretion. He puts his confidence too rashly in young and untried men. In political, as indeed in ecclesiastical, matters, judgment is at present much needed.

MR. NASH (*cheerfully*). You're quite right, your Grace. I am no politician myself, but I can quite see how the public is led astray. I was very much interested in what you were saying last night about the uncertainty of the popular judgment. Why, you never can tell whether a piece will run a thousand nights, or whether you will have to take down the

bills before the week is over. All I can see is, that the public are our masters; and it's my own private impression that they know about as little of dramatic art as they do of theology.

A. OF L. I beg your pardon, sir. I was not aware that—may I take the liberty of asking?—ur—I had—ur—in fact—ur—imagined that—ur—you were in some way connected with the diplomatic service. I presume, from what I gather——

MR. NASH. Right you are, your Grace. I am an actor, and have been so most of my life. My name's Nash, of Nash's Theatre. Low comedy is my particular line, although I am considered uncommonly good in character parts. I wish I could see your Grace at my house now and again. I am sure you'd enjoy "Pots and Kettles," and "Twiddlecombe's Troubles" is really amusing, I give you my word.

A. OF L. (*archiepiscopally surveying his gaiters*). I was not aware, Mr. Nash, to whom I was talking, although I confess that it gives me great pleasure to meet you. I take considerable interest in the drama, and was much pleased with the manner in which the undergraduates of St. Christopher's reproduced the "Supplices" of Æschylus the year before last. And this makes me the more regret that talents such as yours should be, as I cannot but think, thrown away. If the great gifts which you undoubtedly possess had

been, under Divine guidance, turned into another channel, what invaluable results might not have ensued! These are grave times, and every man should do what he can to aid the cause of the Faith.

MR. NASH. I entirely agree with your Grace. The times are very grave—especially from your Grace's point of view. But it seems to me that it is the Church which is in fault, rather than the stage. You think I ought to put my gifts to higher purposes? What do you do with your great gifts? You took a first class in classics, and you were Warden of your college when my nephew was an undergraduate there. And you have written a book on "Præhistoric Pythagoreanism," and another on the "Mutual Outlines of Intuition and Faith." But what do you do now? Literally nothing. You spend the Parliamentary season in London attending to your duties, as you call them, in the House of Lords. You pass the Vacation on the Continent, first sticking a notice in the papers to say that letters of emergency are to be addressed to your secretary. I really fail to see what a Bishop has to do except to ordain, to consecrate, and to confirm.

A. OF L. I assure you, Mr. Nash, the work of a diocese in these days is overwhelming.

MR. NASH. I will take your Grace's word for it. But you will allow me to use your Grace's own argu-

ment. I want to see the immense abilities of the Episcopal Bench put to better purpose. It seems to me, in my humble judgment, that the Bishops are not such a power for good as they ought to be. The fact is, your Grace, that of late years the Church has somehow ceased to draw.

A. OF L. The expression is painfully familiar, Mr. Nash.

MR. NASH. I beg your Grace's pardon, I am sure; but you know what I mean. The Church has got no real hold on public feeling. An eminent preacher is not half so well known as an eminent actor. There is not a man alive in these days with the power that used to be wielded by men such as Wesley and Irving—who, by-the-way, were Nonconformists. Why, if photography be the mere test of popularity, the Bishops of the Established Church are actually eclipsed by the principal Nonconformist ministers.

A. OF L. I presume, of course, Mr. Nash, that you are speaking in earnest; if so, I must remind you that the theatre is only a place of idle amusement, and has attractions of its own for the thoughtless crowds by whom it is frequented.

MR. NASH. That is exactly where your Grace is wrong. The crowds that frequent a theatre are not at all thoughtless. The pieces that draw the largest houses always have something in them.

A. OF L. Surely, Mr. Nash, what are called burlesques——

MR. NASH. Burlesques, your Grace, are as played out as Ritualism. The public wants a piece prettily mounted, but it wants something more. You must have real wit, and in serious pieces you must have real feeling. I happen to be proud of my calling, and I am certain that the hold of the stage upon the public in England at the present day is as great as it was in Athens in the days of Sophocles, with whom your Grace is better acquainted than I am. Everybody talks about a new play. Who ever talks about a new sermon? Everybody knows our chief actors; they are as well known as Cabinet Ministers. Who knows the names of the Bishops, or even how many of them there are? Every penny paper keeps a dramatic critic. When do you ever see a report of a sermon? If there were any vitality in the Church it would come out in Convocation. Who ever reads the debates in Convocation, or troubles about them?

A. OF L. The Church, Mr. Nash, does its work in its own way. It has no adventitious advantages.

MR. NASH. The Church has every advantage, your Grace. Look at Moody and Sankey. They had nothing in the way of stage effects beyond a harmonium. Look at the Salvation Army. Not that I am at all too fond of it myself. But look how it gets hold of the people.

Now, the Church of England, somehow, doesn't do this. Ritualism never had any hold on the masses, who are always suspicious of anything like Roman Catholicism. The Low Church set—the Clapham School—is defunct. Not even a maid-of-all-work thinks it wrong to enjoy her Sunday holiday, and nobody that I know of reads Mrs. Hannah More. Broad Church is too shadowy for the English mind, which never really appreciates the higher criticism. If the Church wishes to be a power, it must make a new departure for itself. There is more connection than might be supposed between the Reformation and the great outburst of the Elizabethan drama. The stage was never so full of life as it is at this minute. Why is the Church so dead?

A. OF L. Although I cannot agree with your remarks, Mr. Nash, they yet are extremely suggestive. I cannot, of course, admit that the stage is at all educating the national mind.

MR. NASH. Of course not. Your Grace does not ever go to theatres, and has no means of judging. But what is the Church doing?

A. OF L. Tell me, sir, what you can suggest that the Church ought to do, or what it is that she leaves undone.

MR. NASH. There are the cathedrals, your Grace. They are the finest public buildings in England; and they are practically useless. The English ritual—if a

layman may speak on such a subject—is very attractive. English clergymen—some of them—are men of great ability. When I am at Oxford by any accident, I never miss University sermon in the morning, and I enjoy evening chapel at Magdalen or New. But, take England all over, the Church wants life, else Dissent would not be so strong as it is. Let the best men preach, your Grace. Make more use of your cathedrals. Have shorter services, and make them more attractive, and the Church will then get hold of the people, as it has got hold of them in the country parts of France. And let me advise your Grace to go to the theatre once or twice, and see for yourself one or two of the kinds of plays that are really successful, and ask yourself what it is in them that makes them take.

A. OF L. (*with a dignified smile*). I cannot promise to take your advice, Mr. Nash, but much of what you have said has interested me profoundly. (*Assumes the air of one who considers the conversation to have been closed by an appropriate benediction.*)

MR. NASH (*taking the hint*). Your Grace is too kind. I dare say all this is new to you. If you want to move people, you must give them something new, and you must let it be good as well. I've been on the stage for thirty years, and I ought to know. (*Bows his farewell.*)

A. OF L. (*meditatively*). I should certainly never have taken him for an actor. I never knew those kind

of people were ever gentlemen, or even educated. I often wish myself that we were more like the judges—more of a power. I'm sure I take great trouble over my charges; and I was five years over my "Harmony of the Major and Minor Prophets," which not even the *Spectator* has noticed. I see whom he had in his mind. He was thinking of men like Liddon, Farrar, and Kingsley. But men of that sort are always dangerous (*shakes his head profoundly*). You are never sure what they may not commit you to.

MR. NASH (*assuming his stock facial expression of intense silent enjoyment*). Rum old buffer! Got a good appearance. Well preserved. Well got up. Fine voice. Pleasant manners. He ought to take, but he doesn't. Why on earth is it that parsons, big and little alike, do get so abominably cramped in their style? That's what I wanted to tell him. However, it's no business of mine, and it will be all the same a hundred years hence.

THE SHADOW ON THE BLIND.

SAM CHAPMAN was a Yarmouth man, and skipper of a large ketch, which regularly trawled on the Dogger Bank. The vessel was Sam's own. During his early days he had been a seafaring man, and had visited every part of the world. But he was Norfolk to the backbone, and more Yarmouth than Norfolk. So when his old mother died, and he sold up her boarding and lodging house, and generally realized her estate, and discovered that he was worth nearly a couple of thousand pounds, he had a smack built for him in the yard of Messrs. Fellowes, and found himself master of his own vessel, and with a comfortable sum at the bank. Sam was now some thirty years of age; sunburned like any Spaniard, with crisp curly hair, dark-brown eyes, large white teeth, and an immense physique. His build was that of a bear, his manners were those of a schoolboy, his laugh was exhilarating; but he had a will of his own, and he could use his fists upon provocation.

One way and another, Sam was making about two

hundred and fifty pounds a year. He owned no man as master, and so got full price for his fish. When on shore he had always gold in his pocket, and he used to sit among the notables, in the smoking-rooms of the Angel in the market-place, and the Royal and the Crown and Anchor on the old quay, and discuss the affairs of State and the condition of the fish-market. Sam was a warm man. The big salesmen would associate with him; the editor of the leading Yarmouth paper did not contradict him. He could have been in the Town Council if he had pleased. And when he returned one day for his week on shore, after eight weeks on the Bank, he found he had been elected churchwarden. Clearly, then, Sam ought to get married. Everybody told him so. And Sam accordingly did marry the prettiest girl in Yarmouth—where beauty is more common than might be supposed. The marriage for a time was happy. Sam was proud of his wife, and Mrs. Chapman was proud of her handsome husband, who could take his ketch out through the Gat on the darkest night, drink his rum-and-water against the oldest skipper in the town, and punch the head of any man in Yarmouth, Lowestoft, or even Gorleston. Sam took a charming little house in Row 1184, one of the most fashionable Rows in Yarmouth. There were a parlour, and a kitchen, and a back yard, and two bedrooms; and Sam furnished the house from top

to bottom in the most approved style, and hung up portraits of the Royal Family, and had the door and shutters painted in bright green nicely picked out with vermilion, and had put upon the door an unobtrusive brass plate with the inscription "Saml. Chapman, Master Mariner." He used to be away for his eight weeks on the Bank, and then spend his week on shore while the *Mary Jane* was refitting. Only one thing troubled him. He was a kind-hearted man, and fond of children; and he had no family.

After three or four years, dark suspicions began to gather in Sam's mind, and he confided them to his brother skippers in the smoking-room of the Angel, not four hundred yards from Row 1184.

"When I came back o' Monday," said Sam, "she'd got a new silk dress, and she said she'd bout it out o' her savins. I didn't say nout, but I arst her where she'd bout it, and she said at Skipley's for five pound, and it was very cheap. So I goes round to Skipley, and I sees old Ketteridge, his managing man. She had bout the dress there, and she'd had it made there. That were trew, but the dress and the trimmins were seventeen pound fifteen; so I says to Ketteridge, 'How was it paid?' 'In gold,' says he. Now, I don't like the look o' that;" and Sam brought his fist down on the table with a blow that would have stunned a pig.

Now, Sam's friends had known perfectly well what was coming. People talk a good deal at Yarmouth. They talk in the market-place, and on the fish-wharf, and along the quay; and they chat at their doors in the Rows. Mrs. Chapman's gorgeous apparel and her general "goings on" had long been discussed at Yarmouth tea-tables; but Sam was so good a fellow that no man liked to tell him what might, after all, be mere conjecture.

"Young women 'll allers be young women," said a gentleman of authority in the herring trade. "They likes dress. It comes natural to 'em. Don't you get them ideas into your head, Sam."

And in this sage judgment the other notables concurred. But the old salesman was uneasy in his mind, and Sam was moody.

"If I catch him," said Sam, "I'll murder him!" And so the matter dropped.

It was about the autumn equinox when the *Mary Jane* was towed down river by the *United Service*, and Sam stood boldly away through the Gat. The wind began to freshen, and presently a regular north-easter burst upon the vessel—one of those north-easters that come tearing down from the North Sea and sweep the Norfolk coast. The *Mary Jane* was well handled, but the weather was too much for her. She carried her maintop-mast and mizentop-mast. Her mainsail was

blown into ribbons. And when the gale subsided she lay-to under jib and mizen. Late in the evening of the next day the *United Service* spied her on the horizon, steamed up to her, and towed her into Yarmouth. Sam, who was tired and weary, sought the friendly shelter of the smoking-room of the Crown and Anchor. There was no occasion for sympathy, for Sam was a solvent man, the *Mary Jane* was insured, and the worst of the business was the loss of a week to make her good again. But, of course, Sam was a hero, and he told his tale several times over several glasses of rum-and-water, until the clock reached the fatal hour of eleven and the company was turned out. Then Sam walked home to Row 1184.

He passed through the little wicket gateway, and made his way along the cobble-paved alley till he reached his own house. The passage and parlour window were dark, but in the window above there was a light. Somehow or other the silk dress came into Sam's mind, and he filled his pipe, forgetting to light it, and leaned against the opposite wall.

Presently upon the blind appeared the shadow of Mrs. Chapman, who was letting down her hair and then coiling it up. Sam watched intently, for the hour was late, and he felt curious as to where his wife had been spending the evening. Then, suddenly, there appeared on the blind a second shadow. It was not

Sam's shadow, and it was not that of Mrs. Chapman. The second shadow attempted to caress the first, and the first shadow hit the second back with the hairbrush, Sam said nothing and did nothing. He waited till the light was put out. Then he waited and meditated for a good hour. Smacksmen are not always quick at making up their mind. But he realized the situation at last, and he also recollected that there was no egress from the house except by the little passage which passed the door of the sitting-room.

Crossing the Row in a stride and a half, Sam battered at his own knocker violently. After a time the upper window opened, and Mrs. Chapman put out her head. "Go away," said that virtuous spouse, "or my husband will come down and thrash you." Sam battered again. "Go away," said the lady, "or I'll shriek for the police."

"You come down, Polly, and let me in," said Sam. "It's me—it's Sam."

"It ain't," said Mrs. Chapman. "Sam's at sea." And she shut the window.

Then Sam wrenched up a cobble out of the footway, and sent it through the window with a crash. This brought Mrs. Chapman to the window again. "Come down," he said, "and let me in, or I'll put my back against the door and burst it.'

In a few seconds Mrs. Chapman was at the door,

a few clothes hurried on her, and her face like ashes.

"I didn't know it was you, Sam, dear. I thought you were at sea."

"So I were, but I've come back."

"What has happened, Sam, dear?"

"Plenty and enow. Shipwreck."

"Oh! Sam, I'm so glad you're back safe. I was praying for you on my knees to-night when the wind blew."

"*Were* you?" said Sam.

"Yes, Sam, dear; and then, when I heard the knocking at the door, I was so frightened. Do sit down, deary, for a little. The fire's alight still. Let me pull your boots off for you and bring you some beer."

"You may bring me a jug of beer," said Sam, "but I'll keep my boots on." And he sat down in the large Windsor chair that faced the door of the little sitting-room.

"I'll just go and get the beer, dear," said Mrs. Chapman; and she was going to shut after her the door into the passage.

"Leave that door open," said Sam. "I allus like a door open."

Mrs. Chapman went for the beer, and returned with it, and with a heavy heart. She did not know how long Sam had been standing in the Row. She had no

idea how many cards he held in his hand. But she felt there was danger about, and she was almost paralyzed with terror. At Sam's bidding she filled his glass, heaped coals upon the fire, and sat down opposite to him. It was now nearly two o'clock in the morning. Sam lit his pipe and smoked and said nothing. The wretched woman sat and watched him, wondering what was to come.

"Hadn't I better shut the door, Sam? There's a terrible draught."

"I allus like a door open," repeated Sam. "I like to hear the old clock in the passage."

Now, this was untrue, and Mrs. Chapman knew it. Presently she said patiently, "Sam, dear, I'm tired. Let me go up and get the room ready for you. You must want sleep badly."

"I don't want no sleep," answered Sam. "I like sitting here afore the fire with you."

This also was untrue, and Mrs. Chapman knew as much. The clock in the passage struck half-past two, and three, and four, and Sam sat smoking on steadily, watching the passage, and also watching his wife's face grow paler and paler. But he smoked in silence, and his demeanour was absolutely inscrutable.

Soon after four, Sam's quick ear detected a movement in the room above, and heard the window gently opened. Sam got up out of his chair, and stepped as quietly as

he could into the passage. Mrs. Chapman, in her chair, fairly swooned with terror and tension. Sam waited with his hand on the latch of the street-door until he heard something drop into the Row from the window above. Then he came out at one step, and laid hold of the man he had been waiting for.

That man never told his grievances in a police-court, or sued Sam for assault. But how Sam dealt with him is matter of tradition on Yarmouth quay to this day. When he was found by the police, lying senseless in the middle of the market-place, he had a dislocated ankle, three or four broken ribs, and hardly a tooth left in his head. He was a young solicitor, so perhaps he had a wholesome horror of law. Anyhow, he went home, and, as soon as he could, sold his Yarmouth practice, and settled down somewhere in Northumberland at a considerable distance from the sea-coast.

Sam returned, and sat down again. Presently his wife came to herself, and looked at him in speechless agony.

"There's been a drunken man in the Row," said Sam, "and I've a-kicked him into market-place. Get me another jug of beer."

By this time Mrs. Chapman knew all. She brought the beer, and sat down in abject silence while her lord and master replenished his glass.

Sam sat, and smoked and smoked and smoked, while

the wretched woman opposite him could hear the beating of her own terrified heart. The clock in the passage struck five, and then six, and then seven, and then eight. As it finished the last stroke of eight, Sam got up out of his chair and strode to the passage. The miserable woman clung to him.

"For God's sake, forgive me, Sam!" she cried. "Do forgive me! I will be good! Indeed I will!"

Sam made no answer, but he extracted a light walking-stick from the umbrella-stand, and he then and there gave his wife a beating of which Norfolk wives speak to this day with bated breath. Mrs. Chapman staggered to the house of a neighbour—a kindly soul not without frailties of her own—and was there helped to bed more dead than alive.

Having got so much of his business off his mind, Sam walked down to the quay, and entered the office of Mr. Trumbell, auctioneer, estate agent, valuer, surveyor, shipbroker, &c.

"Mr. Trumbell," he said, "you've heard of my loss; what'll you give me for the *Mary Jane* as she stands, and get what you can out of the insurance of her?"

Mr. Trumbell gasped. "My dear Chapman, you mustn't take things this way. Look here. If you want a hundred, or a couple of hundred, have it from me. Your bill is all the security I want."

"If you don't buy the *Mary Jane*," said Sam, "I'll

sell her myself at auction this afternoon at Bridge Stairs. I'll give you ten minutes to consider."

Now Mr. Trumbell was a man of the world, and he knew Sam Chapman to be a man of his word. So he said, "Well, Sam, I'll take her. Fellowes shall throw his eye over her. She was built in his yard. It won't take him half an hour, and he'll do what's fair between man and man."

"Right you are," said Sam. "Send round to him at once. I'll come to you for your cheque at four o'clock this afternoon."

This did not astonish Trumbell, for he was a wealthy man, and large transactions in ready cash are not uncommon in the shipping business.

But he was fairly amazed when Sam said, "And now, Trumbell, there's another thing. I want you to sell off my sticks in Row 1184. It's getting on for ten. Get some of your men, and come along at once."

Trumbell, who was an honest man, expostulated in vain. He pointed out that the sale would be a forced one, and at a ruinous loss; that the furniture was all new; that they ought to have a catalogue printed, and advertise the sale in the papers. Sam was obdurate.

So the bellman was sent for, and he made proclamation with his bell along the quay, and on the fish-wharf, and in the market-place, and on the sands; and the neighbours, all more or less ignorant of what had

happened, came to buy. Trumbell was a man who took a pride in his work as an auctioneer, and he has been heard to say he could have cried over the prices. When the sale was over, even to the smallest stick and scantiest scrap of carpet in the little house, Sam walked down with Trumbell to his office.

"I'll take your cheque for the auction money, Trumbell," he said, "and your cheque for the smack."

So the two cheques were given on the eminent house of Lacon on the old quay. There was just time to cash them before four o'clock, and Sam changed them into notes, drawing out his own balance at the same time.

Whatever ideas Mr. Trumbell may have had, he kept them to himself. Sam engaged the great Nelson room at the Crown and Anchor, and dined there in state with Trumbell and some twenty other friends whom he collected. Everybody knew what had happened, but nobody alluded to it. A good deal of wine was drunk, and after the wine a good deal of punch. Then Sam rose to his legs, and said, "Good-bye, boys. I'm off to London by the last train."

And off he was, and he has not since been seen in Yarmouth. He is heard of from time to time. He has been seen at Barcelona, at Buenos Ayres, and at San Francisco. He does not look a day older, and is as handsome as ever.

Mrs. Chapman, on the other hand, has become *passée*. She has never thoroughly recovered from the effect of that night of terror. If you visit Yarmouth during the season, you can see her on the pier, showily dressed, and evidently painted. But she is not received in Yarmouth society, and everybody in Yarmouth sympathizes with Sam.

THE BITER BIT.

From Miss Ada Norton, 15A Leinster Gardens, W., to the Hon. Mrs. Masher, Harkaway Hall, near Malton, Yorkshire.

February 15, 1886.

MY EVER DEAREST DI,—You will be surprised at hearing from me again so soon after my last letter; but when I tell you that this one is strictly *on business* you will understand my object, and will further it (I am sure, dear), if *at all possible.*

As you know, I have been doing the Brighton season under the wing of our dear Ethel. With her position, as the wife of the great Sir Timothy Porker, and the *chatelaine* of the biggest house in Palmyra Square, she was, of course, able to give me heaps of *opportunities.* She did her very best, that I *will* say—and so did I. Well, although I told you the other day that I expected at least *two* of "them" to declare themselves before we left Brighton, here we are again back in London, with my prospects of making a good match no farther advanced than before we left Leinster Gardens.

Ah, if poor, dear Mamma were only alive! A mother can land many a big, undecided fish, where even the best of *chaperons* is powerless. But I must not complain—Ethel has been most sympathetic throughout; London is already quite full; and I am to stay on here until Easter. That is, unless——! Unless you ask me to come and *stay with you, dear*, for a few weeks!

Don't look so horrified at my cool impertinence, Di; I shouldn't suggest such a thing, if it were not that I feel that you are *a true friend*. Were we not known at school as the Three Graces? and did we not vow an offensive and defensive alliance against every eligible *parti* in the kingdom?

Being the only maiden out of the three with any money at all, by rights I should have gone off first. Three hundred a year is not a fortune, true enough; but it inspires confidence. Now you are the Hon. Mrs. Masher, future Viscountess Toffton; Ethel is Lady Porker, future millionaire; and I——well, I am nobody.

Now I want to be somebody!

To come to the point. This morning Ethel received a letter from a friend of hers who is staying with Lord and Lady Paddington. Among other tit-bits of news, she revealed the fact that one of the guests at Paddington Towers is a Mr. Templeton, who has

lately come into *an enormous fortune* from a distant relative.

Now, Paddington Towers is only two miles from Harkaway Hall. And you live at Harkaway Hall. *Need I say more?*

Write soon to your ever devoted

ADA.

P.S.—*Of course* you will *burn* this letter *as soon as read.*

From the Hon. Mrs. Masher to Miss Ada Norton.

February 16, 1886.

MY DEAREST ADA,—Come, by all means, and stay as long as you like. I will meet the train which arrives at Malton, 3.55 P.M., the day after to-morrow.

Yours in haste,

DIANA MASHER.

P.S.—Mr. Templeton dined here yesterday. He is quite too pleasant.

From Richard Templeton, Esq., Paddington Towers, near Malton, York, to Captain Swift, Grand Hotel, Paris.

February 24, 1886.

DEAR OLD BOY,—It's freezing hard to-day, so there's no hunting; the ice won't bear, so there's no skating;

the women won't be down for another hour, after the ball last night, so there's no flirting. What can I do better than ease my conscience while I have leisure to feel its sting, and answer your last jovial effusion?

I have been here about a fortnight, and have had several good runs with the York and Ainsty, and one or two good bags in the coverts. Old Paddington is a rare good sort; there are some good people staying in the house; and we have had some good theatricals, good dances, and good dinners.

However, until a few days ago, I was boring myself, notwithstanding all the efforts of my gracious hostess. Whether it is that I am sinking into the sere and yellow, or whether it is that one has gone through the country-house routine so often; I was distinctly boring myself.

I think, however, I must confess that the truth of it is that I am beginning to feel the necessity of settling down. My life has not been *all* cakes and ale, as you know; and now I should like to enjoy myself a little with a congenial companion. I am now in a position to marry, and (without vanity) to marry well. But, alas! the women are all so palpably looking out for rich husbands, that I hate the sight of them.

I should say *hated*. For, a few days ago, I made a most charming acquaintance, and I have found it improve upon further acquaintance.

There is staying with a Mr. Masher, of Harkaway Hall, close by, a certain Miss Norton. I took her in to dinner last Tuesday, and, since then, have come across her several times. Her very remarkable beauty attracts me, of course; but what (to me) is her greatest charm lies in the fact that she has repeatedly told me she hates mercenary marriages; and, if ever she marries (which she doesn't intend to), she will marry a man whom she can love and *respect* for himself alone. Indeed, as I understand she has an independent fortune, she can afford to indulge her fancy.

Her innocent prattle is quite refreshing after the——
By Jove! I hear her voice in the hall, so good-by.

Yours ever,

DICK.

P.S.—Young Podsnap, who has £2000 a year, is evidently smitten. But she won't have anything to say to him.

From Miss Ada Norton, Paddington Towers, to Lady Porker, 15A *Leinster Gardens, London, W.*

March 3, 1886.

MY DARLING ETHEL,—Hurrah! I have done the trick at last, my dear.

I brought him to the point by saying that "my cruel relations wished to force me into an alliance with a

man of vast wealth, but whom I could not, ah! I could not *love*."

Il en était temps, for Dick was getting quite jealous of poor little Podsnap, and, as likely as not, would have gone off in a huff. Now, Jack Podsnap is a dear boy, and his £2000 a year would, under other circumstances, have been very nice; but £250,000 is not an every-day haul.

The enamoured Dick immediately proposed an elopement and prompt marriage. I as immediately accepted, provided dear Di *gave* her consent, and chaperoned us up to your place. We shall be married from your house, dear, the day after to-morrow!

Isn't it all *too* lovely? I will wire all details. In greatest haste.

Ever your happy

ADA.

P.S.—I forgot to tell you that Mr. Templeton's son by his first marriage is also staying in the house. He is the most awful youth I ever beheld, and affects the æsthetic craze. His eyes are like boiled gooseberries, and his hair is as long as mine. He actually had the audacity to propose to me. Of course I gave him the snubbing he deserved.

A.

From John Podsnap, Esq., Paddington Towers, to Mrs. Podsnap, 24B Eaton Square, London, S.W.

March 5, 1886.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,—All is over! She has refused me!! But that is nothing to what she has done!!! She has eloped with Templeton!!!!

If it were not for you I should contemplate suicide. As it is, expect me by first train to-morrow.

Your wretched son,

JACK.

P.S.—Give the devil her due, however! She *must* be disinterested! Although she has only £300 a year of her own, she is lovely. *He* is bald, a good deal over fifty, and has nothing but his Civil Service pension of £750 a year. Of course you know he is a widower, and that a maternal great-uncle left his boy a quarter of a million last year.

"RIEN NE VA PLUS."

It was seven o'clock in the evening, and Walter Gerald was walking up and down under the clock at Victoria Station. He was a very unhappy man. Many men in his position would have solved the great problem of life for once and for all; would have done so on their own account, without taking friends into their council.

At length the train was ready, and Gerald found himself in a first-class carriage bound for Dover. It is a short journey, but not the less a tedious one, and the train was no sooner out of Victoria than he lit a cigar, and under its influence began to consider his position and to reflect upon it.

His life had been a very sad one. He was the youngest son of a large family. The orders given to him had been, "Make your own way in the world. You have been sent to Eton, you have been sent to Trinity, you have been called to the Bar, you have an allowance of £100 a year which is paid to you punctually. What more have you any right to expect?" On this understanding he had commenced life, and,

extraordinary as it may seem, he had failed. When I say he had failed, I mean that he saw no prospect before him beyond that of three or four hundred a year as a hard-working junior at the Bar. It was a dreary outlook.

He had further complicated matters and entangled himself. Not that his entanglements were in any way dishonourable. He was a man with many faults and no vices. He did not drink; he did not gamble. He was entirely innocent of intrigue or of anything even remotely approaching to it. His tastes were those of a healthy man. He hated a ball-room; he loved the fresh air and the smell of the sea. Such men make the best colonists. As a colonist he would have done well.

Unhappily for him, there was the skeleton in his cupboard. I am not going to excuse him or to invent excuses for him. I have only to tell the facts. He had, to use the only word that fits all the circumstances, eloped with the eldest daughter of an old county family. She was older than himself; how much older she would hardly have cared to confess. She had certain superficial accomplishments that pleased him. She could hold her own in conversation, unless, by accident, a little French drifted in. She could play the piano and sing a little; above all, she could pretend. She pretended, for instance, to understand Browning,

and to study him. In reality she was an inveterate reader in her own bedroom of penny dreadfuls.

Women of this kind have the advantage of a man. And the reason is very obvious: it is because the man, in his folly, trusts the woman, whereas the woman does not trust the man. The man is chivalrous. He sees a woman whom he believes to be all soul and heart, although there may have been certain deficiencies in her education. His idea is that he will raise her to his own level; and that is his honest intention. The idea of the woman is to secure herself a position, from the advantage of which she can insult her old friends and acquaintances. Her vision is a big house with a retinue of servants, with herself as mistress, and with her husband to sign cheques. I will do the English shrew, or vixen, or whatever you like to call her, this amount of justice—that her notions are limited to social aggrandisement. The idea of deceiving her husband on any vital matter seldom if ever enters into her head. This is, perhaps, because most Englishwomen, especially those of a certain type, are as incapable of genuine emotion as they are of artistic feeling.

Under these circumstances and these conditions Gerald started for Dover, where he had business—business so genuine that even his wife had been satisfied with it as a sufficient cause for his journey. As he went down, however, he meditated with himself, and

when he reached Dover his plans were somewhat changed. He stopped there for a day. The next thing that he did was to depute the whole of his business to agents whom he could trust. He then wired to his wife, giving her an address in Dover which he had arranged. Lastly, he started for Monte Carlo.

Monte Carlo has been described over and over again. I am not going to repeat the fault. Everybody knows what the place is like. Everybody knows how you play at the tables, how you almost invariably lose, and how you sometimes win, and how the journey is sure to do you good, as you cannot possibly lose more money than you take with you.

At Monte Carlo Gerald had luck, or, in the language of the place, he was *en veine*. He did not break the bank, nor did he have German barons and French financiers stand wondering behind his chair. This kind of business I will leave to professional writers of romance, who transport a gipsy girl from her canvas tent to the *salon*, and there make her, to all intents and purposes, tweak duchesses by the nose. It is my business to give history, and confine myself to possibilities. Now and again men win at Monte Carlo, and Gerald was among the now and again. It was not the coolness of his mood, for he was boiling over with passion; it was not in his power of watching the game

and calculating chances, because he was profoundly ignorant of all mathematical questions, and could not for the life of him have solved the most ordinary problem in algebra offered to candidates for an Army examination.

But he played, and, somehow, he won. The money came in. He put his winnings into his pocket, and played with the money he commenced with. He won again, and he put more money into his pocket. Somebody must, now and again, win something at Monte Carlo, or else nobody would go there. Late that evening Gerald counted up his winnings at the Hôtel de Paris. No doubt luck had favoured him, and unless luck favours a man you do not often make him the hero of your story. If Gerald had lost, and had been obliged to go to the English Consul, or to apply for the *viatique* from the Administration, or otherwise to cadge, I should not be telling his story. As matters were, he had won something like £800. He banked the greater part of this amount, sending some money to his wife, and remained where he was.

The game still continued to favour him. You cannot account for its extraordinary chances. Men on the Turf believe that they know everything. Now and again some "rank outsider," to use the customary phraseology, is picked out by a fortunate backer. It proves to be the winner, and a little fortune is made.

Some men go under. Of these the history remains unwritten. Gerald, so far from going under, remained fortunate. He had elected to take his chance of winning upon the gambler's cast, and he won upon it. Fortune, as I have said, no doubt favoured him. Any village schoolmaster could write the history of the world, commencing from first principles, if there were not unluckily big men in the way to upset his calculations. Big men, or big winners, it is all one. You may conquer a province or break the bank. Of the two, if history is credible, the easier achievement is to conquer a province.

When Gerald left Monte Carlo, after paying his hotel-bill and otherwise satisfying all just demands upon him, he had, as Englishmen would say, in his pocket, or, as Americans would say, concealed about his person, no less a sum than £6000.

What is £6000? If you care to gamble with it on the Stock Exchange or elsewhere, you may turn it into £60,000 or even more. If you invest it on solid security, you will be worth something like £250 a year. You may make another calculation. You may consult the tables of mortality, take from them your own estimate of life, cut your money up into portions, and allow yourself so much a year, overlooking the chance that you may outlive the tables of mortality, and so possibly be reduced to the workhouse. Or you

may put your money into the hands of a solicitor. You will approach him humbly, and you will beg him as a favour, and as a something entirely out of the way of ordinary business, to invest your money for you upon good security. But then the solicitor may bolt with the money. And, if so, where are you?

Walter Gerald did none of these things. He lodged his money at a responsible bank, and he instructed them to act as his agents, and not only to let him draw against his dividend, but also to let him touch his capital within limits. His bankers were a very old firm, between the Royal Exchange and what used to be Temple Bar. All the clerks of that establishment look like partners, and the porter at the door could not possibly run after a thief if he wished to do so, being too heavily weighted with buttons which are generally believed to be of solid bullion.

He next hailed a hansom, which drove him to an hotel in Trafalgar Square, a well-known resort for Americans, one at which he used to stay when he was a lad at Cambridge. Then he sent a letter to his beloved wife by special messenger, not trusting it to the ordinary mechanism of the Post Office. The letter was simple, and, at the same time, characteristic. I cannot help giving it in its own terms:—

"My dear Wife,—You have repeatedly told me that you could do better without me. I do not accept you as infallible, but iteration is next door to inspiration. I have come to believe that you are right.

"In this letter is a cheque for £200. You may take it as a free gift. My bankers have instructions to honour your cheques to the same amount for each year, so that you are a year to the good. I trust you will not live beyond your income. This is entirely for your own sake.

"I have it upon your own authority, in fact from your own lips, that I am only fit for a billiard-marker. You under-judged my capabilities. When you are near Mont Blanc the mountain looks very small; but it takes a very remarkable woman to climb to the peak of it. You are, in a way, a remarkable woman. But as you have now that small and certain income for which you have always pestered me, I leave you in the assurance that you are happy.

"For my own part, I am returning to Monte Carlo, where I have accepted the office of croupier. The weekly salary attached to this position will sufficiently meet my modest requirements, the chief of which is solitude during my leisure hours. Should you take it into your head to follow me up, I may assure you in advance that you will find the police at Monte Carlo

extremely troublesome, especially if any attempt is made to interfere with the officers of administration of the Salon des Étrangers, or in any way to annoy them.

"Good-by. I shall taste the joys of Paradise before my time.

"WALTER GERALD."

"THERE'S MANY A SLIP——"

From Benjamin Abrams, Esq., of Crœsus Chambers, Regent Street, to Captain the Hon. Cornelius Fitz-Blarney, Grenadier Guards, Wellington Barracks, S.W.

July 1, 1885.

SIR,—When you called upon me last week, *in re* your overdue promissory note, you represented to me that you were still engaged to be married to Miss Torchey, the wealthy ironmaster's only daughter.

On the strength of that representation, I consented to renew the bill and advance you a further sum of money. I have since ascertained beyond a doubt that there was no truth in your statement, and that you, moreover, knew it to be false.

Under these circumstances, I have no alternative, consistent with my duty to myself and to society, but to say that, if you do not take immediate steps to refund me the hard cash you have obtained from me under false pretences, I shall instruct my solicitor to

take criminal proceedings against you without further notice.

Your obedient Servant,

BENJAMIN ABRAMS.

P.S.—To prove that I am in full possession of the facts, I need only add that your engagement was broken off by the lady in consequence of your connection with Miss Pussy de Clare, and that you were ejected from the house by the lady's father in a somewhat summary fashion.

B. A.

From the Earl of Mavourneen, Castle Blarney, Ireland, to Captain the Hon. C. Fitz-Blarney.

July 7, 1885.

MY POOR BOY,—You must have been mad to have got yourself into such trouble. You must be still madder to imagine for one moment that I can get you out of it. For the last two years I have received no rents at all. My tenants couldn't pay. Now I have no hope of receiving rent at all. For now my tenants *won't* pay. Not to mention that there are certain mortgages, which—but why tell you what you know as well as myself? I am, to all intents and purposes, a pauper.

But, though I can't send you any money, I can send

you a piece of news. That charming Lady Cheltenham (who helped me to *lancer* you, as I dare say you—forget) has a Miss Semantha Babb staying with her, an American orphan-heiress.

Make your peace with Israel, and—*Verb. sap. sat.*

Your affectionate Father,

MAVOURNEEN.

From Captain the Hon. C. Fitz-Blarney, to Lady Cheltenham, of 15 *Dado Street, Mayfair, W.*

July 10, 1885.

MY DEAR LADY CHELTENHAM,—I really was beginning to think that you had given up us poor Cockneys *une fois pour toutes,* when the Duke told me yesterday (*the* Duke, you know, *your* Duke) that you were up for the season, and intended once again to prove that the *salon* is not yet a thing of the past even in benighted, slangy London.

I am longing to know which is your "at-home" day, as I have quite a stock of news for you. Or, better still, shall I call some morning, as I——Well, shall I?

Tout à vous,

CHARLIE.

I hear you have a young lady from the States, a Miss Babb, under your wing. I am sure she must be the daughter of dear old Babb of New York, who was

so tremendously kind to me when I passed through on my way to Niagara. I am only too charmed to have the opportunity of doing all that I can to mark my sense of her father's cordiality.

From Lady Cheltenham, Lakes Hotel, Windermere, to Capt. the Hon. C. Fitz-Blarney.

July 20, 1885.

DEAR CAPT. FITZ-BLARNEY,—I had no intention of coming to town at all this year; but as my friend, Miss Babb, wished to be presented, and to take a peep at English society, I took a house for a month.

Miss Babb, I am sorry to say, came to the conclusion that we amuse ourselves *moult tristement* in London, and so has persuaded me to take her to Trouville. We are here for a time to satisfy her romantic yearning to breathe this poetry-laden air, and to prepare for the dissipation of those quiet little French watering-places.

The "dear old Babb" you mention will not serve you much, I fear, with us, as Miss Babb's father died thirty years ago, only two years after she was born. That was, perhaps, as well; for it would have been a great grief to him when the small-pox spoilt her beauty so sadly.

I have no more time to waste on you; so,—ta, ta!

Yours truly,

BLANCHE CHELTENHAM.

P.S.—I hear that Miss Torchey has jilted you. Deluded girl! She little knows what a treasure she has lost. "The disinterested love of an honest heart——" *N'est ce pas?*

Telegram from the Capt. the Hon. C. Fitz-Blarney to Manager, Lakes Hotel, Windermere.

July 21, 1885.

Shall arrive this afternoon, five sharp. Keep best rooms you have at liberty for me.

From Capt. the Hon. C. Fitz-Blarney to Miss Semantha Babb (delivered by hand under cover of a flat candlestick).

WINDERMERE, *August* 5, 1885.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,—Forgive the way I address you. This is my first letter to you. And, after the happy fortnight I have passed in your company, I *can not* say "Dear Miss Babb," and I *dare* not say—— what so fain I would.

So let it stand. I hope I may call you "my friend." I know you are the dearest I ever had. One short fortnight has proved to me that there is, at least, *one* woman who can understand the yearnings, the cravings, the sufferings of a man's world-lacerated heart! I feel that in you I have found a friend.

But I do not write to tell you what you know as well as I do, or as Lady Cheltenham. I write to tell you more than Lady Cheltenham's constant interference at sympathetic moments will allow me to say in words. In finding a friend, I have lost my heart. I love you, Semantha!

Therefore I leave you. And to-morrow. For you are rich, and I am poor! For the same reason, I broke off my engagement to Miss Torchey. Lady Cheltenham would smile incredulously at this, no doubt! But the proof of the fact lies *here;*—for honour's sake, I refused an alliance with a woman whom I only *liked. Now,* for the same honour's sake, I refrain from breathing a word of love to one whom I——whom I——

Oh, that you too were poor! How I would work for you! How I would slave! How I would——

Farewell, Semantha! Fare thee well!

Ever and only yours,

CHARLIE.

Forgive this blurred and hurried scrawl. A man is not always master of feelings as deep as those I am now trying to control.

From Miss Semantha Babb to Capt. the Hon. C. Fitz-Blarney (delivered by hand, under cover of a breakfast-cup).

August 6, 1885.

If you *really must* go, you can say *good-by* to me after breakfast on the *island.* I shall go out in a canoe. I am real *sorry* for you. Perhaps you won't *need* to go at all though. Perhaps——!

From Capt. the Hon. C. Fitz-Blarney, Langham Hotel, W., to Benjamin Abrams, Esq.

August 21, 1885.

MY OWN PRECIOUS DARLING,—Just time to tell you of a dreadful and cruel disappointment. Can't arrange legal matters till 27th, although I have moved heaven and earth to get away to-morrow. Don't forget your silly old lover; and, above all, don't let the Frenchmen make love to you.

More by next post. In greatest haste,

Your ever devoted and adoring

CHARLIE.

A thousand thanks for the cheque, which will set my poor old father free at last. But without your love, what comfort would even the sight of a father's joy be to one so deep in love as I?

From Capt. the Hon. C. Fitz-Blarney, to Miss Semantha Babb, Hôtel de Paris, Trouville.

August 21, 1885.

DEAR BENJY,—Enclosed I send you a cheque for the balance of our little account. I had to kid precious strong to get it, but at all events there it is. You won't doubt *my* honour again, I *don't* think. And I think you are not sorry that you didn't bring an officer and a gentleman to smash for once.

Well, let bygones be bygones! Pussy de Clare is helping me to celebrate the burial of my bachelorhood; we have some fellows coming to dinner to-night; and the address is "Roseleaf Lodge, Brompton Road." Come, if you like, at eight sharp; and bring some one nice with you. But mind she is not American, heavily pitted, and thirty-three, as I should politely decline such a painful reminder of what waits me at Trouville.

Yours forgivingly,

C. FITZ-BLARNEY.

The preceding returned, addressed to Capt. the Honourable Charles Fitz-Blarney, in the handwriting of Miss Semantha Babb, postmark "Trouville."

A MODERN HERMIT.

He was, beyond all question, a very curious man; and I came across him in an unexpected manner. I was on a tricycle tour in the north of Devon; and I suddenly discovered that I wanted oil. I came to this conclusion at the top of a steep hill. Below me the road ran down to a small stream, which marked out the valley. Over the stream ran a bridge; and at the corner of the bridge was a small cottage with a patch of garden.

As I dismounted from my vehicle, I discerned my friend. He was dressed in a loose suit of tweed, and wore a straw hat with an unusually broad brim; and he was engaged in pruning and trimming a black Hamburg grape-vine that was trailed in rich clusters round about his chimney-stack. It was a model of a cottage. Commencing with the bridge, there ran along the side of the road a low stone wall with a little gate in it. This formed one boundary of the estate. Then a thick hedge of hawthorn ran in a semi-circle down to the river. The river itself formed the third boundary. Towards the edge of the stream sloped down a smooth

lawn of fresh turf, radiant with small beds of flowers. The rest of the garden was conducted upon economical principles. There were lettuces and cabbages and rhubarb; there were some fine raspberry-canes; there was a plantation of gooseberry and currant trees; there was also an asparagus bed, a cucumber frame, and a patch reserved for vegetable marrows. But everywhere, in and between the beds, and about the borders, were standard roses, rich in all the luxuriance of their magnificent blossom.

He was halfway up his ladder, against the chimney-stack, busy with his vine, when I called out to ask him if he could oblige me with a little oil. He turned his head, descended the ladder, and opened the little gate as I dismounted. I explained my difficulty—that my bearings had become heated; and I soon found myself inside his cottage, which consisted, so far as I could see, of two little rooms and a garret in the roof. The one was fitted as a kitchen, with a coal-bunker, a cooking-stove, a small copper, and a dresser, with pots and kettles below it, and abundance of clean crockery on its upper shelves. The sitting-room—the second—reminded me of my own old college chambers—except that there was a certain nautical atmosphere about it. In one corner were three ship's bunks, fitted against the wall and ranged one above another. Tightly screwed to the mantelpiece was a ship's chronometer in its case.

There were no chairs, but there were settles against the wall. And in every nook and corner there were book-shelves crowded with books.

The little matter of the oil was soon arranged. But after I had got my bearings into working order and was about to resume my journey, my friend invited me to stay and smoke a pipe. I have not as yet described his appearance. He seemed some fifty years of age, but time had dealt kindly with him. His hair was closely cropped, but he wore an immense beard which rolled down over his flannel shirt. His chest was deep, his shoulders were broad, his limbs were muscular, his whole build was somewhat heavy and bearish, and there was a curious look in his dark brown eyes, as if he were looking at things and thinking of things many hundreds of miles away. While noticing these facts, I had lit my pipe in compliance with his invitation, but I was astonished to see him open a bunker under one of the settles, and produce a bottle of what proved to be genuine Leoville, and of a very good season. He also placed on the table, from out of a cupboard in the chimney corner, a box of cigars, the brand and quality of which were beyond dispute. I preferred, however, to remain faithful to my well-used briar-root, and, as I was lighting it, I complimented my host on the extent of his library.

"It is not so large as I could wish," he said, "but I

have chosen it very carefully. Up there on the little shelf are all the classics worth reading, in the Tauchnitz. I have no room for such duffers as Livy, Sallust, and Eutropius. One must economize space in a hut like this. My French library is scanty. You will find Montaigne, Brantôme, Rabelais, Molière, and a few odd volumes of Balzac, Voltaire, and George Sand. As for German"—here he burst into a tremendous laugh—"I cannot read it, and I do not intend to learn. My English books are enough to last anybody through the longest winter. With Ben Jonson, and Defoe, and Fielding, and a few other such friends, a man need never feel dull or wearied."

"Then you live here all the year round?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "I have been here now for some years, and I shall probably stop here for many years to come. The place suits me. My rent is only twenty pounds, and my landlord is good enough to allow me to roam through his woods and to fish his waters as I please. I do not abuse the permission, and it adds greatly to my enjoyment. I am fond of flowers. I grow my own fruit and vegetables, as you can see. Poultry and pigeons are destructive, but I have some fine rabbits. I would keep a pig, were it not for the trouble of attending to the beast."

I began to feel strangely interested. My new friend

had spoken without the least reserve, and yet there was evidently some sort of a secret about him. In a tentative kind of way I asked him whether he found life dull.

"Not at all," he replied. "Nigger here"—Nigger was an overgrown bulldog, who was at the moment stretched out at full length, precisely where the patch of warm sunshine slanted on the threshold—"is capital company. You know what Landor said: that he was sorry for the man who had got a wife, and had not got a dog. Then I have my garden; and I can catch eels from the lawn. In the evening I go down to the Horse and Groom. The big men of the village—the butcher, and baker, and candlestick-maker—discuss affairs of State there, and are very severe on Mr. Gladstone. Then, too, the curate looks in now and again, and drinks tea and plays chess, and tries to gently coax me into the right path. What path are you in yourself?"

I was a little bit upset by the suddenness of the question, and was beginning to stammer out a vague answer, when he sharply interrupted me.

"No, I don't want your religious views. The religious opinions of a man are no good to anybody but himself, and they are not always that. I mean, what are you, and what is the station in life to which it has pleased Providence to call you?"

I told him that I was an assistant surgeon in a large

London hospital, and was now enjoying a short autumn holiday.

"Yours," said he, "is the finest profession in the world. If you really love science, you will never feel the want of anything else. I wasted the first thirty years or so of my life over other things, and it is too late for me now to begin. But I know a little mathematics, and keep on pegging away at them. The curate helps me. He was a Senior Optime or something of the sort. Then, too, I am fond of botany and of ornithology. I have made a very fair herbal, and that case behind you contains at least a hundred varieties of English beetles not as yet described in any catalogue of which I know."

Although he was thus frank, there was yet something about him that made cross-examination impossible. My first and only attempt at it was a signal failure.

"You have yachted in your time?" I suggested, indicating the ship's chronometer.

"A chronometer," he answered, "keeps better time than a clock, and gives less trouble. As for my bunks, I had them built because they take up very little room, and I do not care to sleep in the cockloft under the tiles, or to put a friend there."

I was so disconcerted by this failure to extract information that I at once turned the conversation towards the broad channel of general topics. We finished the

Leoville and strolled out into the garden. My friend showed me his beehives, which were in perfect working order and all fitted with the latest appliances.

He insisted that I should sample his apricots, which ran in rich luxuriance over the southern wall of his cottage. I also inspected a huge trunk with holes in it, wherein he kept a supply of eels to meet any sudden emergency of the table. Nigger meantime followed closely at our heels.

"I am my own gardener," he said, "my own cook, my own housemaid, and my own bailiff. Nigger here keeps the boys away from the apricots and the honey. I hope I shall see you on your return, and, indeed, you will be welcome at any time."

I thanked him cordially for his hospitality, and also for a small bunch of choice stock roses which he insisted on making up for me.

"Give them," he said with a laugh, "to the young lady at the bar, and you will get a better dinner and a more gracious smile."

We shook hands cordially, and I departed. He came out into the road to see me off. As I turned the corner I looked back. He was standing in the road puffing at the end of his cigar and with Nigger crouched at his ankle. We waved our hands to each other. I rounded the corner, and I have not seen him since.

Have I any ideas of my own about this strange

hermit, with his library, and his cottage, and his bull-dog, and his bees, and his excellent claret? I never care to speculate about the affairs of other men. To do so when they have shown you unsolicited hospitality is not only impertinent, but ungrateful. And yet I think the secret of my friend's life was hardly a secret at all. Over the mantelpiece, above the chronometer, exquisitely framed and carefully protected from the air by glass, hung the portrait of a woman. She seemed about twenty-five years of age, she was extraordinarily beautiful, and in her lap lay a rich wealth of freshly cut roses.

VISCOUNT LACKLAND; OR, USURY.

SCENE:—*Promenade des Anglais, Nice.* MR. BARKER *(senior partner of Messrs. Barker, Mortmain, Barker, & Draft, of Lincoln's Inn Fields) is dividing his attention between "Galignani" and the view. Enter* MR. LAMAN EIKÉ.

MR. EIKÉ. How are you, Mr. Barker, eh? Glorious weather, this.

MR. BARKER (*stiffly*). Good-morning to you, Mr. Eiké. (*Becomes intensely interested in "Galignani."*)

MR. E. (*undaunted*). Tried the tables, eh, Mr. Barker? You've earned your holiday. I hope you are enjoying it.

MR. B. Our amusements differ, I imagine, Mr. Eiké. I never gamble.

MR. E. Ah, well, you see, I do. I lost a cool two thou. last night.

MR. B. Indeed! (*Obtrusively refolds his "Galignani."*)

MR. E. Well, if our amusements differ, business brings us together, anyhow. You'll be wanting to see me pretty soon, I expect, over young Lackland's matters.

I don't intend to wait any longer. I know old Bare-acres is a client of yours.

MR. B. I enjoy his lordship's confidence, Mr. Eiké.

MR. E. Then you'll enjoy it soon to some tune. It's thirty thou. you'll have to find, or else the game's up. I'll take nothing less, if I have to make the young man a bankrupt and buy in the reversion. I'm the only creditor of importance, and the cards are in my hand.

MR. B. (*laying down his "Galignani"*). Of course, Mr. Eiké, there is such a thing as a Court of Equity. I need hardly remind a gentleman of your experience of that.

MR. E. (*chuckling*). I have met you in it once or twice, Mr. Barker, when you haven't exactly held trumps. You got precious little change out of me last time.

MR. B. (*with assumption of dignity*). It is a pity, sir, that our courts do not give more adequate protection to reckless and inexperienced young men.

MR. E. (*lighting a huge cigar and sitting down*). Why, Mr. Barker—Cigar? Oh, don't smoke? sorry for you—why, I don't see very much difference between my business and yours. Half your work is raising money, and the rest making out bills of costs.

MR. B. (*judicially*). Pardon me, sir; there is the very greatest difference.

MR. E. I don't see it, then, I'm blest if I do! Look

here, I lend young Lackland solid money. I charge him stiff for it; but look at my risk. I shall be out of my money a long time, anyway. Perhaps I shall never see it; for old Bareacres is a good life, and I'm a little dickey. Well, I've insured Lackland very heavily. It costs me a lot a year, I can tell you. Ten to one, if he dies a little too soon, the offices will dispute the policies, and say he used to drink, and that I'm only a Jew money-lender. Then I've always got the chance that the father or the son, or both of them, will dispute the whole thing. A man who risks his money that way expects to make on it; and you know I do my business fair and square. I charge a big price. But then there's the stuff down, and no deductions.

MR. B. Possibly, sir. But if young men like Lord Lackland were commonly prudent, they would raise money—if they had to raise it at all—in a legitimate manner, through the regular channel, and at a reasonable rate.

MR. E. "Reasonable rate," Mr. B.!

MR. B. My name is Barker, Mr. Eiké.

MR. E. Very well, Mr. Barker, then. "Reasonable rate"! Reasonable gammon! Look here: what do *you* do? You won't lend a cent without security up to the hilt, and you charge five per cent. for doing it. It pays you a precious deal better than investing in Consols, and it's quite as safe. Then, a nice little lawyer's bill

you run up over the job, you and your son-in-law the conveyancer who prepares the deeds, which are all common form, you know; as common form as a bill of exchange. And I suppose solicitors never get commission on life insurance. And then, as soon as you can decently work it, your client is "very sorry, but he is obliged to call his money in." And so you have to find another client and transfer the securities to him, and go through the whole rig over again.

MR. B. I do not know if you mean to be offensive, sir.

MR. E. Not a bit of it. But I know this, that, what with one thing and another, you make thirty per cent. on your money, with security as safe as the Bank. I take no security, and when I have reckoned my losses perhaps I make fifty. I wish I was in the legitimate line myself, but I'm bringing my boy up to it anyhow. He's at Eton, you know, along with your sons. They're rather thick, I believe.

MR. B. (*disconcerted*). I was not aware of the fact.

MR. E. (*cheerfully*). Oh yes. I mean my boy to be respectable, you know. Live in Grosvenor Square; go to church; take the chair at missionary meetings like you fellows do. I'm too fond of the tables, I am. And I like baccarat, and I'm fond of horseflesh; and every now and then I get the "knock" pretty heavy, I can tell you. But the boy's a good boy; not a young rip

like Lackland. And (*meditatively*) I shouldn't mind seeing him county member. And Lackland Towers might suit him some day. Odder things have happened.

MR. B. Mr. Eiké, your sentiments towards your son do you every credit, but the Lackland estate is strictly entailed.

MR. E. (*knocking away an inch and a half of ash*). Is it? Well, entails don't always last, and there are other firms than yours, Mr. Barker. But really I should like to settle this matter amicably. (*Rises.*)

MR. B. (*rising also*). Sir, in cases such as this, I always advise my clients to avoid, if possible, the enormous expense and painful publicity of litigation.

MR. E. (*stretching his legs*). I reckon they don't find private arrangements very much cheaper, anyhow. Your firm have a fine business, Mr. B. And I like that place of yours in Berkshire very much. You made a good bargain when you bought up the equity of it.

MR. B. (*preserving his equanimity*). Well, Mr. Eiké, I am sure you have no personal feeling in Lord Lackland's matters.

MR. E. (*emphatically*). Not a d—n!

MR. B. And I should wish, for the sake of the family, that matters were arranged without scandal. I have heard something of the Viscount's entanglements;

besides, Lord Bareacres is in precarious health, and any sudden shock——

MR. E. (*dryly*). Is he? I didn't know it. Well, Mr. Barker, I'm at the Hôtel de Paris, Monte Carlo. If you'll dine with me to night——

MR. B. I am very much afraid I am engaged. But I am here for some time; we shall meet again, no doubt. (*Offers his hand, which* MR. E. *shakes heartily. Aside to himself, resuming his seat, and forgetful of his "Galignani" and the prospect*) That's a dangerous fellow! I must wire to Draft. Thirty thousand, he said. He'll take twenty *at once*. The Bank will do it for us at four. We must make it five and a half, and the costs will come to something. A very dangerous fellow indeed! (*Meditates.*)

MR. E. (*to himself as he saunters in a satisfied lounge towards the Gare, en route for Monte Carlo*). Sly old scoundrel! Means mischief, or he wouldn't have ended so civilly. Wants his own pick at the bones, does he? Infernal old hypocrite! He'd stand in with me to-morrow, if I gave him the chance. You are a nailer, you are, Mr. B., you and your piety; but you ain't a patch on Sol Isaacs. Sol will best you yet, my boy. (*Throws away his cigar, and whistles the Glou-Glou duet from "La Mascotte" in an undertone of quiet content.*)

TIT FOR TAT.

From Miss Dorothy Sampson, 17 Pomona Gardens, Bayswater, to Sir Reginald Fogle, Bart., Baccarat Club, Pall Mall, S.W.

July 20, 1885.

MY DARLING REGY,—I feel most acutely that it is not for me to write to you first, after the way in which you treated me at Lady Cheltenham's last night, even if it were only to ask you for an explanation of your extraordinary behaviour. Instead of coming to claim the dance I had promised you, although you had acknowledged Mamma's bow, and therefore *must* have known that *I* was there, you filled your card nearly up before coming near me. And when I said, *as was only natural*, that it was rather *unusual* conduct, you went off in a huff, talking about returning presents and never seeing each other again, and so on.

But, Regy, you know I love you. Although you have run through so much money, and have been so wild, I am quite ready to wait till you get that appointment; and we can satisfy Papa that, at all events, you are a

good boy. So, you can't call me so very unkind, after all, can you? This is our first quarrel—let it be our last.

I shall expect you to call to-morrow afternoon to be forgiven.

Yours still the same,

DOLLIE.

From Sir Reginald Fogle, Bart., to Miss Dorothy Sampson.

July 21, 1885.

MY DEAR MISS SAMPSON,—I have just received your very kind letter, and for which I thank you sincerely. At the same time, you must be aware from what you have seen of me that I am not a man to come to a determination lightly, nor, having come to it, lightly to depart from it. I have lately noticed (and specially the night before last) the lamentable incompatibility of our tempers. Far be it from me to blame you for the misunderstanding between us! On the contrary, let us both be thankful that you are not yet irrevocably bound to one possessed of a heart so sensitive as not to be able to support a slight, however unmerited, from the object of his affections.

I therefore think it better far—

"Best for you, and best for me"

—that we should part. Enclosed you will find the letters you have addressed to me, and the cigar-case. I will leave the rest to your discretion. My letters to you, I know, are in good hands.

Believe always that I shall entertain the deepest respect for you. I trust that the end of our engagement will not also prove the end of our friendship. Forgive me if I give you pain. It is only to save you misery.

Always most sincerely yours,

REGINALD FOGLE.

P.S.—I am sure you will not misinterpret me if I add that I hear your father, although one of the most respected merchants in Leeds, is not *the* Mr. Sampson of Leeds. Now, how could we live? I, depending upon the remote possibility of an appointment of £200 a year—you, with the tastes, habits, and aspirations of an extravagant woman. Impossible!

From Miss Dorothy Sampson to Sir Reginald Fogle, Bart.

November 21, 1885.

DEAR SIR REGINALD,—I was glad to meet you in Piccadilly the other day, but I was sorry to see you look so pre-occupied. I *do* trust it is not the little

mistake which I made in entrusting my life's happiness to your care which occasions your grief. I assure you that your letter to me after Lady Cheltenham's ball quite dispelled any girlish folly I might have retained in my head.

Why did you tell me, by-the-way, that "the appointment" was a certainty of £2000 a year, if it was only an improbability of £200?

But, as the actors say, "a truce to this." I have been enjoying myself vastly; and I trust that, for all your careworn looks, you have been doing the same.

We are at home on Wednesdays. Pray call; that is, if you meant what you said about "friendship" in your letter.

Sincerely yours,

DOROTHY SAMPSON.

P.S.—Talking of friendship, I am ready to prove *my* friendship for you. Listen! Mrs. Thompson is staying at the Grand Hotel, Brighton, with her two daughters. One is lovely—one is plain. But one has just come into her godmother's money (£150,000). I am sorry to say that I hear it is the plain one. Why not go down and make love to her? She is very romantic, so pray *don't talk about settlements* if you want to succeed. If you marry her, don't forget that you owe it to the friendship of your old friend Dollie.

From Sir Reginald Foyle, Bart., Grand Hotel, Brighton, to James Similler, Esq., Baccarat Club, Pall Mall, S.W.

January 5, 1886.

DEAR JIMMY,—Just received yours. I can only say that *it is all right.* It will be all settled in a day or two. I am very sorry that I can't promise you anything just at present, as the girl is very peculiar, and won't even *listen* to the mention of anything connected with money. However, I've done the trick this time, I think. She's booked, I feel sure. The sister is one of the sweetest girls I ever saw, and *such* a beauty, but "where the treasure is there must my heart be also!" *My* one, Sarah (pretty name, isn't it?), is most certainly plain, but she is well gilt. £150,000 is not so bad, is it, old man?

You shall have the amount I owe you as soon as the wedding is over.

Yours always,

REGY.

P.S.—I would send you something on account, only the expenses of the wedding and the honeymoon will make more than a big hole in my ready money. And, until we are married, I can't claim much control over hers; can I?

From Sir Reginald Fogle, Bart., Grand Hotel, Brighton, to Miss Sarah Thompson, Grand Hotel, Brighton.

January 8, 1886.

I love you madly, passionately, and you know it. Think me foolish, think me—well, anything you please; but believe in my sincerity when I tell you that I cannot stay on here—nay, more, that I cannot stay in England—unless you deliver me from this awful suspense.

Shall I go, or not? Tell me, darling Sarah.

Yours ever, and always,

REGINALD.

From the "Times" of the 25th of February 1886.

On the 23rd inst., at St. Vitus's, Bayswater, by the Rev. Aloysius Brown (uncle of the bride) assisted by Canon Cruttwell, Vicar of the Parish, Sir Reginald Fogle, Bart., of Fogle Hall, Brokenshire, to Sarah, elder daughter of John Thompson, Esq., of 15 Modderit Square, Bayswater, W.

From Miss Dorothy Sampson, to Sir Reginald Fogle, Bart., Hôtel des Princes, Paris.

February 29, 1886.

DEAR SIR REGINALD,—Allow me to congratulate you

on the occasion of your wedding, which I saw announced in the *Times* of the 25th.

I am afraid you must be a sadly changeable man. I remember you once wrote to me to say that you could not marry unless the young lady had money. Why did you go and fall in love with Miss *Sarah* Thompson, when it is her pretty sister, Miss *Blanche* Thompson, to whom the £150,000 was left?

However, to a man possessed of a sensitive heart like yours, the mere suggestion of a mercenary motive must be unutterably disgusting. So I will say no more but this—that your disinterested choice does equal honour to your head and your heart.

Yours,

DOROTHY SAMPSON.

I don't quite remember whether, in my last letter to you, I said that the money had been left to *Sarah*. Did I?

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LE REVERS DE LA MÉDAILLE.

Tom James Hadderly, Esq., Manager of the Hilarity Theatre, Piccadilly, to Lord Eustace Wayle, Crocus Club, Pall Mall.

January 22, 1881.

My dear Lord Eustace,—I was not surprised at receiving your letter, as I have suspected you, for some time past, of a more than decided partiality for Miss Undine Duval; I have now and then fancied that she might one day return it.

You could not have done better than apply to me. An actress may deceive her own family as to her morals and her manners, but she will find it very hard to take in her manager.

As Miss Duval has been a member of my company for over two years, I am therefore speaking with authority when I say that I should no more believe an imputation against her character than against my own sister's.

It is true that she takes leg-parts in opera-bouffe, and that she has always had hosts of admirers; but she is a

lady, if ever there was one, and whoever may speak lightly of her lies in his throat.

It is obvious that my testimony must be disinterested, since, if you marry her, I lose the best "draw" I have had yet. Well, then, I will conclude with this—if she consents to become your wife, you are a devilish lucky man!

Yours very sincerely,

JAMES HADDERLY.

From the Duke of Barbellion, Castle Barbellion, N.B., to Lord Eustace Wayle, Grand Hotel, Paris.

February 22, 1881.

DEAR EUSTACE,—As your letter, just received, informs me that your marriage with an actress is now a *fait accompli*, I shall not waste either time or paper with the enumeration of my various and very natural objections thereto.

It is ridiculous to remind me that Dukes have sometimes sought their wives on the stage. A Duke can do many things that a Duke's dependent cannot.

But, after all, you *are* one of my sons.

On condition, therefore—

1st. That your wife never again performs in public, and,

2nd. That you both live out of England, I will allow

you £500 a year, upon which sum, together with the income of £300 you have under your poor mother's will, you ought to be able to live very comfortably.

I warn you that the continuance of this allowance depends entirely upon your strict fulfilment of the conditions I impose. I thank you for the expression of your filial devotion.

Yours affectionately,

BARBELLION.

From Lady Eustace Wayle, Magnolia Villa, Ballaboola Road, Melbourne, to Mrs. Duval, 173 Craven Street, Strand.

January 30, 1883.

You keep saying that I don't answer your inquiries about Eustace. Well, my dear Mother, I don't say anything about him, because there is nothing cheering to say. He cannot help being an invalid, poor fellow; but I don't think that I should have married him if I had known that he was consumptive. Besides, what with doctors' bills, the delicacies he cannot live without, the carriage exercise he must have, and so on, we cannot make both ends meet.

You may as well know it at once. I have had to go back to the stage. I feel that if once Eustace were to find that marriage had deprived him of his accustomed

luxuries, he would cease to love me—perhaps end by hating me.

And so I have got an engagement at a Melbourne theatre at £12 a week. It is a long drive from here, and when I have done at night I have to sit up, as a rule, nursing, till about three in the morning—sometimes later. So it isn't a very lively state of things, is it, dearest Mother? . . . .

From Capt. Hugh Forrester, A.D.C., Government House, Melbourne, to Charles O'Shanter, Esq., 3rd Life Guards, Knightsbridge.

February 30, 1884.

. . . . Who do you think is out here with his wife? Who do you think lets his wife act in boys' parts at the Gaiety, and cops the salary to pay for his pretty victoria and fine old port? Why, Eustace Wayle, who used to be thought rather a good fellow, and has now turned into a selfish, invalidish beast. Poor Undine! I used to be awfully fond of her—I am afraid I am so still. It is too dreadful to think of the life she must lead, particularly since the Duke's agents have found out that she has returned to the stage. It seems that the Duke stopped Wayle's allowance the moment he heard of it. And friend Wayle (who was ready enough to let her do it, as he thought, "on the quiet") now rounds on her, and says she has ruined

him. It makes my blood boil when he talks of it. Don't take any notice of what I say in this disjointed letter. Above all, don't think that Undine has ever given me the slightest encouragement to breathe a word of my devotion. She is an angel! . . . . .

From Messrs. Shortcroft & Raid, 15 Lincoln's Inn Fields, to Lord Eustace Wayle, Melbourne.

July 10, 1884.

My Lord,—We have the honour to inform you that, according to the will of your lamented father, the Duke of Barbellion (whose decease we announced to you by telegram), you are entitled to the sum of £50,000, free of legacy duty, which sum we hold at your disposal.

Awaiting your lordship's instructions, we are, my lord,

Your lordship's obedient Servants,

Shortcroft & Raid.

From Captain Forrester, Long's Hotel, Bond Street, W., to Lady Eustace Wayle, Grand Hotel, Brighton.

January 17, 1885.

My darling Undine,—I have just received your letter. You acknowledge that your married life has never been happy; that, at the best, you have been nothing more than a nurse and a bread-winner; that your husband's conduct has every year become more

selfish and cruel; and that, now he has come into some money, he openly regrets having married you—and yet you refuse to come to my loving arms and tender care.

Well, I respect you for the refusal, darling. It shows you are worthy of my love. But, thanks be, there is a way out of the dilemma.

Leave him. Come up to London. We will openly take apartments together as man and wife. But I pledge you my word of honour, as an officer and a gentleman, that I will only come to see you as I would a *sister* until he has got his divorce, and then—then, we will be married immediately!

Your own,

HUGH.

Telegram from U. Wayle, Brighton, to Capt. Forrester, London, January 18, 1885.

Meet me, Victoria, five-thirty this afternoon. Have decided to act as you wish.

Divorce Court Proceedings, subsequently reported in the "Times."

WAYLE *v.* WAYLE *and* FORRESTER.

This was an undefended action, and the allegations of the petitioner having been fully proved, the Court pronounced a decree *nisi*, with costs against the co-respondent.

EPISCOPAL DISCIPLINE.

SCENE:—*The Horticultural Fête at Crichelhampton-on-Sea.*

THE BISHOP OF CRICHEL, *in an apostolic attitude, is watching the conclusion of the lawn-tennis match for the championship of the county. The match is over, and the conqueror, the* REV. THOMAS JONES, B.A., *raises his forefinger to the peak of his flannel cap as he crosses the shadow of the episcopal gaiters.*

THE BISHOP OF CRICHEL. Good-morning, Mr. Jones. You have won the match, I learn.

MR. JONES. Yes, my lord; I have pulled it off this time; glory be!

THE BISHOP. Really, Mr. Jones, that is not quite the language—ur—which—ur—I should have hoped to have heard——

MR. JONES. Why, Bishop? You're from Cambridge, and so am I. I was rowing in Third Trinity when your lordship was tutor at Kat's. I thought your lordship would be glad to know that we'd lowered the

dark blue. Colonel Bowyer, of the garrison, laid me a pony to ten on the Rural Dean, who was so great a player at Oxford. Used to play Mark Pattison, you know.

THE BISHOP. I cannot altogether regret this meeting, Mr. Jones, because it—ur—gives me—ur—the opportunity of saying a few words to you. Shall we walk aside?

MR. JONES (*thrusting his racket under his arm*). Certainly, my lord.

THE BISHOP. I have been anxious for this opportunity for a long time, Mr. Jones.

MR. JONES. I live five miles from your lordship's Palace. A letter could easily have fetched me.

THE BISHOP (*severely*). And I rejoice that it has come at last. The Archdeacon, Mr. Jones, does not speak well of you. I am told that you keep a yacht, that you hunt, and that you shoot; and to-day I learn with amazement, from your own lips, that you bet!

MR. JONES (*penitentially*). It was a very little bet, my lord. Only twenty-five pounds, and with my brother-in-law.

THE BISHOP. Twenty-five pounds, Mr. Jones, is——

MR. JONES. The precise income of your lordship's private chaplain. Yes, my lord. I pay my own curate two hundred.

THE BISHOP. Mr. Jones, the total value of your vicarage is only two hundred and seventy-five.

MR. JONES. Yes, my lord, with a very nice house and garden, and eighteen acres of glebe. But the parish is a very straggling one, so I keep a curate to do the light work for me.

THE BISHOP (*simmering*). I would have you understand, Mr. Jones, that I am speaking seriously. Your levity is ill-assumed. When a beneficed clergyman in my diocese keeps a yacht, and hunts, and shoots, he sets a bad example, and neglects the—ur—opportunities of —ur—edification which have been graciously bestowed upon him.

MR. JONES (*defiantly*). My lord, you're Bishop of Crichel, and I am Vicar of Pebblehampton. By what right does your lordship speak to me in this way?

THE BISHOP. As being, by the grace of God, your ecclesiastical superior. Your conduct, Mr. Jones, has long pained me very deeply, and I must insist on an alteration.

MR. JONES. Look here, my lord. I have two hundred and seventy-five a year. I pay two hundred out of my own pocket to a curate whom I am not obliged to keep. My brother, a medical man, who has no occasion to practise, lives with me at the Vicarage, and attends all the poor for nothing. My curate looks after the old women and hears the children their Catechism. I, myself, preach on Sundays, audit the parish charities, and

supplement the poor-law out of my private purse. I will not ask your lordship how your episcopal revenue is apportioned.

THE BISHOP (*uncasily*). Sir, there are many demands which——

MR. JONES. Yes, I know. Your lordship has a large family.

THE BISHOP (*reaching boiling point*). Sir!

MR. JONES (*unabashed*). Yes, my lord. There have been five good livings in your lordship's gift. Two have gone to your lordship's sons, and three to your lordship's sons-in-law.

THE BISHOP (*boiling over*). Sir! I exercise the patronage which Heaven has placed in my hands with a due regard——

MR. JONES. Oh, yes, my lord. You never promote a man who rides to hounds, or follows the partridges, or keeps a fifteen-ton yawl.

THE BISHOP (*choking with indignation*). Certainly not. And let me tell you, Mr. Jones, that I have warned you as a father might warn an erring son, and that, unless I soon hear differently from the Archdeacon, I shall feel it my painful duty to take the opinion of my Chancellor.

MR. JONES (*placidly*). Your fourth son-in-law and recognized leader of the Muckborough sessions. Very well, Bishop. I see him coming this way with your

family party. Before they reach ear-shot, let me tell you just this—that you're a humbug.

[THE BISHOP *turns purple with indignation.*

MR. JONES (*utterly unmoved by the episcopal wrath, and emphasizing his sentences by slapping the palm of his hand with the rim of his tennis racket*). Yes, my lord, a humbug. I care as little for your lordship as for your lordship's Archdeacon or your lordship's Chancellor. I rowed in the Third Trinity boat, and I was fourth classic. Your lordship never did anything at Cambridge, and you never would have been a Bishop but for the influence of your wife's brother's sister-in-law with her own sister, the wife of the Lord Chancellor. You do not yacht because you can't afford it, and would be sea-sick if you could. As for shooting and hunting, you know rather less about them than you do about cricket. You are notoriously mean in money matters; and yet you dare to censure me, who spend in my parish very much more than my small stipend.

THE BISHOP (*recovering breath*). I was not aware, Mr. Jones, that the Lord had so blessed——

MR. JONES (*brusquely*). The Lord! It was my uncle, Dan Murdoch, the ironmaster.

THE BISHOP (*gasping*). Of Gartsherrie?

MR. JONES. Exactly so; well, he did his duty by me, and so a few hundreds a year spent in my parish don't hurt me.

THE BISHOP. Indeed. I was not aware that Providence had—ur—so—ur; but—ur—here are my wife and daughters. May we hope to see you and Mrs. Jones this evening at the Palace?

MR. JONES (*good-naturedly*). Thanks, my lord. I and my brother, the doctor, are both bachelors, and we dine to-night with the garrison.

THE BISHOP (*with episcopal persuasiveness*). Then to-morrow evening. My wife and daughters will——

MR. JONES. I see them within ten yards, Bishop, and I am somewhat scantily dressed. I can't come to-morrow. I am off for two days' trawling. Good-bye, and think better of me. I entirely forgive the Archdeacon.

[*Exit.*

MRS. BISHOP *and the family appear on the scene.*

MRS. BISHOP (*authoritatively*). I trust, Bishop, you have spoken to that man as he deserves. The Archdeacon has just assured me——

THE BISHOP (*testily*). Bother the Archdeacon!

MRS. BISHOP (*horror-struck*). Bishop!

THE BISHOP. Yes, Maria, Mr. Jones is a credit to the diocese.

ELDEST MISS BISHOP (*scornfully*). I don't think a clergyman a credit to the diocese, pa, when he smokes a short wooden pipe in the cut-flower tent, wears a black necktie, and actually drives up the officers from the barracks in their four-in-hand.

THE BISHOP (*sharply*). Hold your tongue, Elizabeth! Maria, a word with you (*walks apart with* MRS. BISHOP). The gifts of Providence are manifold. Mr. Jones has been amply blessed. He and his brother are nephews and co-heirs of Mr. Murdoch, the great Iron King. Mr. Jones is doing admirable work in his parish. God has blessed his labours, and I feel it my duty to single him out for preferment. Elizabeth is twenty-seven, I think. Yes, exactly so. Maria, you will write and ask Mr. Jones and his brother to dinner.

(*Scene closes.*)

A PRUDENT MARRIAGE.

From Sir James Coynless, Bellwether Castle, Loamshire, to the Dowager Lady Hookham, 17A Palmeira Square, Brighton.

October 20, 1875.

My dear Lady Hookham,—I dare say you will be surprised at hearing from me, but when I tell you I am writing in the greatest perplexity, and upon the most delicate matter, you will, I am sure, understand my object in addressing you, and excuse the trouble I am giving you. You will see by the address that we are at present still staying with the Bellwethers. Under ordinary circumstances our visit should now terminate; but Evelina has been the life and soul of the party, and Lady Bellwether has fallen quite in love with her. And, on my side, Lord Bellwether, who is not so young as he was, and is very fond of a good opponent at chess, and a good listener to his interminable stories about George IV.—Lord Bellwether declares that I am the only man in the house worth associating with.

That means, for me, free quarters till further notice;

and for Evelina, the chance of securing one of the two most eligible *partis* I have yet succeeded in finding for her. But, alas! my dear lady, there is an adder in the path. What was the use the other day, when we went in a party to Carlingford Abbey, of my putting the wretched girl into the phaeton with young Lord Bullion because I was nervous, and "preferred Evelina's place in the landau with dear Lady Bellwether"? What was the use, when Juteley, the rich cotton broker, came for a walk with my misguided daughter and myself, of my "having a warning of my old complaint," after a hundred yards or so, and leaving them to finish a two hours' stroll alone?

Alas! my dear lady, none.

For there has been staying in the house a certain George Lynch, who, I believe, is by trade a barrister, who I am certain is falling in love with Evelina, and who, I fear, is inducing her to reciprocate his folly. He certainly is not repulsive in appearance, nor is he dressed otherwise than as a gentleman. And he possesses some sort of superficial talent in the scribbling of rhymes and the tinkling of the pianoforte.

But I feel sure he considers himself lucky if he makes £300 a year. This is bad enough, but the worst has to come:—Lady Bellwether favours and assists the fellow in his audacious design!

Prompt flight is, of course, the only way out of it.

But here is the dilemma; I am very comfortable here, and I don't want to fly. I want to *stay on.*

Can you—*will* you, dear Augusta, help me in this delicate matter? Could you—*would* you invite Evelina to stay with you at Brighton, *at once,* for a time? If such a thing *could* be arranged, you would be the most beneficent "*dea ex machinâ*" ever heard of.

Think of it, and write *as quickly as possible* to your distracted

JAMES.

I looked at your portrait last night! Thirty years ago! "*Hei mihi præteritos!*"

From George Lynch, 3 Pump Court, Middle Temple, to Miss Coynless, 17A Palmeira Square, Brighton.

November 9, 1875.

MY OWN DARLING LINA,—Little did I think when I was introduced to you by Lady Bellwether that, scarcely more than a fortnight after, we two should be standing under the beeches, in the glorious autumn sun, plighting our troth to each other! You need not enjoin caution upon me, my sweet.

And now to the main point in this scrawl. I am working very hard—going to make a fortune—for you. But I shall lose courage unless I see my sweetheart now and then—say once a fortnight.

It is now more than a fortnight since you left the Castle so suddenly. Will you slip out next Thursday morning, and meet me at the station, by the train which arrives from Victoria at eleven o'clock?

We can have a couple of hours on the downs all to *ourselves;* and then I might meet you and the dragon in the afternoon *by accident* in the King's Road. Say "Yes," and comfort the heart of

Yours ever and only,

GEORGE.

From Miss Coyntess, Brighton, to George Lynch, London.

January 20, 1876.

MY DEAREST GEORGE,—I write these few lines in *great distress of mind,* to tell you that you must *discontinue your visits to Brighton.* I have long felt sure, from her manner, that some *spy* has been reporting our meetings to the dragon; and it has been painful enough to put up with the hints and innuendoes which have been heaped upon me in consequence. But after having been caught together in the waiting-room, as we were the other day, my life has been simply *unendurable.* Well, then, be a good boy; wait till we come up to town. In greatest haste, your unhappy

LINA.

P.S.—Don't answer this, *I feel sure* she suspects something, and she is quite capable of opening my letters.

P.P.S.—*Of course* I know Lord Rattelpayte. Isn't he one of Lady Hookham's oldest friends? What of that?

Miss Coyntess, Brighton, to George Lynch, London.

February 10, 1876.

DEAR GEORGE,—I was very much surprised at meeting you yesterday morning on the pier, after my *despairing entreaty* to you not to come down here again. Apparently you care little whether I am *bullied to death* by those upon whom I depend for a home, as long as you can indulge what you call "love," and what seems much more like a *selfish* desire to *have your own way.*

But I was more than surprised at the letter which I have just received from you. What! just because you find me listening to the band with Lord Rattelpayte, I am to be treated with eight pages of preaching and warning and recrimination!

I am quite aware that Lord R. is eccentric. And what if he is? What if he does wear his hair in ringlets? What if he did go "hop, skip, and jump" down the pier the other day? What if he *did* perform strange antics at the Levée last season?

That does not justify your most *cruel* accusation of

insanity! Everybody knows *who he is*. And an Earl can indulge in many freaks that would seem quite wild in the case of a nobody.

As for your *unjust suspicion* about *infidelity*, I can only say that there is nothing whatever between Lord R. and myself but the most *ordinary* friendship. If you are so suspicious and so frightfully *jealous* now, what will you be when you are *married?*

I hope you are very, very sorry for ever having written such a letter.

Yours sincerely,

LINA.

From Sir James Coynless, Bart., 11 *Rue de la Montagne, Brussels, to the Earl of Rattelpayte,* 112 *Belgrave Square.*

April 30, 1876.

MY DEAR LORD RATTELPAYTE,—The only objection I had to the brilliant offer you have made to my beloved daughter was, in a word, the very brilliancy of it.

It would be obviously unfitting that my dear child should contract an alliance so splendid that it would (owing to his straitened circumstances) either entirely separate her from her doting father, or reduce him to dependence upon the intermittent (and perhaps grudging) generosity of a son-in-law.

But the idea which you say has occurred to your Lordship, of securing a suitable annuity to the grandfather of the future Earl of Rattelpayte, in addition to the very handsome settlement you propose to make upon your bride, has put my scruples to flight. As long as honour is safe, you know, my dear lord! I have, therefore, no hesitation in giving my hearty consent to your proposal, and in praying Heaven to bless the union in which conjugal love will be blended with filial consideration and respect.

I will duly inform you of my arrival in town, and remain, my dear lord,

Yours most truly,

JAMES COYNLESS.

Extract from the "Times" of May 9, 1876.

MARRIAGES.—On the 8th inst., at St. George's, Hanover Square, by the Lord Bishop of Rumtifoo, assisted by the Rev. A. Lowmass, the Right Hon. the Earl of Rattelpayte, to Evelina, only daughter of Sir James Coynless, Bart., of Blankton Lodge, Bucks.

From the "Barrister's Budget" of May 1, 1886.

We hear that among the next batch of Q.C.'s the Lord Chancellor has included the name of Mr. George Lynch, of the Middle Temple and the Western Circuit.

We understand, further, that in a few days Mr. Lynch will lead to the altar the Hon. Miss Blanche Codex, daughter of the Lord Chief Justice of England. On both occasions Mr. Lynch may feel sure of the hearty congratulations of his many friends in both branches of the profession.

From the Countess of Rattelpayte, Grimley Towers, Cumberland, to George Lynch, Esq., Q.C., Athenæum Club, Pall Mall, S.W.

May 9, 1886.

I learn by the *Times*, which has just arrived, that you have been made Q.C., and that you were married yesterday to the daughter of the Lord Chief Justice.

Day for day, ten years ago, I married the Earl. Day for day, ten years ago, you wrote me a letter of congratulation, which made me weep, hardened wretch that I was, so heart-broken, so forgiving, so manly a spirit did it breathe.

Now that ten years have past. You have "conquered the world, notwithstanding the bleeding heart within." You are successful, and you deserve to be happy; and now I write, with a bleeding heart, to offer you my sincerest congratulations. Will you accept them? Yes, I think you will if you read on.

For the last seven years I have lived in seclusion,

out in the wilds of Cumberland. My husband is a raving maniac, guarded day and night by two warders. My hair—the hair you used to fondle—is already grey —almost white. And my boy, my pretty boy, the only hope of my life, the only consolation I had—during the past year has shown signs and symptoms, growing worse every day. Oh, George! the taint is in his blood! Are you not revenged? May God bless and prosper you, George, now and always. And, whether or not you have the same mad love for your wife as once you had for me, may she be a helpmeet for you; may you be very happy together; and may you have sweet children to double your happiness and lighten your cares.

Pity me and pray for me.

LINA.

A MODERN OTHELLO.

It was winter time, and Captain Curzon had arranged to spend Christmas with the Lloyds at their place in North Wales—Tan-y-Bwllch. Captain Curzon had been for ten or twelve years in the Blues; and, before joining that celebrated corps, he had spent a short time at Christ Church as a gentleman commoner, and a considerable number of years at Eton. He had rowed in the Eton Eight, played in the Eton and University Elevens, could hold his own at tennis with Heathcote, was a noted swimmer, a bold rider across country, a good shot, and a very capable and deservedly popular officer. For some months past he had been engaged—to use the customary English phrase—to Ethel, Sir John Lloyd's eldest daughter, and the match was one which the friends on each side regarded with the highest approbation. Captain Curzon was in every sense an eligible *parti*. He was young—comparatively speaking; good-looking, of an old family, and fairly well off. He was in high favour at the Horse Guards, and it was perfectly certain that he might confidently look

forward to rapid promotion in his profession. Ethel Lloyd was about two-and-twenty years of age, and had been the recognized beauty of two consecutive London seasons. Her father, old Sir John Lloyd, of Tan-y-Bwllch, the second baronet of that title, claimed to be descended from the Welsh Kings. As to this assertion on his part there may have been reasonable doubts; but as to his wealth there could be no possible question. He owned coal mines and slate quarries, and was sole proprietor of several acres of docks. And so people forgot that his grandfather had been a steward, bailiff, land agent, and rent collector, and accepted Sir John Lloyd's claim to royal descent with the most absolute faith. He was a county member, a deputy lieutenant, a chairman of quarter sessions, and a director of several railway companies. Altogether, the match arranged between Captain Curzon and Miss Ethel Lloyd was, to use the conventional term, eminently suitable.

The courtship had been of the usual type. Captain Curzon had met Miss Lloyd in town when Sir John and his family came up for the season. He had paid her marked attention; and he had at last written to Sir John to request an interview. This interview had taken place in Sir John's library in Eaton Square, a funereal room hung with maps of the Lloyd estates and plans of the Lloyd docks and sections of the Lloyd mines. The result of the negotiations was satisfactory

in the extreme. Captain Curzon, who was madly in love with the beautiful Miss Ethel, found his suit warmly received by her father. Sir John, on the other hand, was delighted to see his daughter married to a man of high family and brilliant position. When Ethel herself was consulted, she did not ask time for consideration. She only stipulated that the marriage should be delayed for a year. As this was considered a sufficiently natural request, her reasons for it were not inquired into. And, to do Miss Ethel justice, she made in every way a pattern *fiancée*. Captain Curzon was incessant in his attentions. To tell the truth, he was very proud of his conquest. Wherever the Lloyds appeared, he was to be seen with them. Nor was there the slightest thing in Ethel's conduct to cause him the least shadow of anxiety. She scarcely danced with any one else, and the devotion of the two handsome young people to one another was matter of admiration in certain sections of society, and of ironical comment in others.

Now, among Curzon's closest friends was a Captain Ralph Thornton of the Coldstreams. He and Curzon had been at the same tutor's at Eton and had rowed in the same boat. They had shared chambers in Albemarle Street, and Curzon had often helped his companion out of money difficulties—for Thornton was the cadet of a poor house, and had considerable difficulty in keeping

afloat. Whether Thornton admired Ethel Lloyd himself, or whether, for reasons of his own, he was anxious that Curzon should remain single, will probably never be known. Captain Thornton is not the kind of man to make confessions. All that is certain is that he received the news of the forthcoming marriage very coldly.

"I know her well enough, dear old fellow," he said. "She is, if anything, handsomer now than she was five years ago, and even then all the men in Wales raved about her. Her people, you know, are not of very long standing; and there was a cousin of hers, a mate in the Cunard Line, or the P. and O., or some such service—not the Queen's—whose head she completely turned. He actually proposed to her. You can guess the kind of reception he got from old Moneybags, who is ashamed of his extraction, and hates his poor relations like poison."

"Well?" asked Curzon, somewhat irritably.

"'Well.' It was not exactly well. If the lad had stuck to his ship, he might by this time have been a purser, or a navigating lieutenant, or something of the sort. But the refusal utterly did for him. He went off to the Diamond Fields, and, according to the latest news, was either speared by the natives or drowned while crossing a river—it does not matter which. You need not trouble yourself; Miss Lloyd could not have

cared much for him. I was in Wales at the time, as it happens. And she, like the rest of her family, took the news of his death with an equanimity which, although he was only a cousin, showed how hopeless the poor fellow's aspirations must have been."

And with this the conversation dropped.

Meantime, hour followed upon hour, day upon day, and week upon week with marvellous rapidity. Curzon's engagement was a subject of universal interest; he received from every quarter the warmest congratulations. Nor did the very smallest speck of cloud threaten the horizon of his happiness. Ethel was even more than all that he wished, and, although naturally somewhat reserved, and perhaps cold, in her disposition, she yet was evidently attached to her lover, and indeed admired him. His friends all assured him that she was the very woman of all others whom he ought to have chosen for his wife. And, as far as their knowledge went, his friends had, no doubt, every reason to flatter themselves that their judgment was correct.

Curzon's fortune would have been sufficient in itself, but Ethel had no brothers, and Sir John was liberal in the matter of settlements.

It was winter time, as I said at first; Christmas was approaching, and in another three months the year of waiting would expire. Curzon, whose happiness seemed to grow day by day, ran down to Tan-y-Bwllch for the

ised Christmas visit, accompanied by his friend, in Thornton. The preparations were on a grand There was to be something like open house. were to be two grand balls and private theatri- nd a concert and a dinner to the tenantry; and Curzon and his friend reached Tan-y-Bwllch e, they found the house already full of guests. fore dinner, Sir John, who was brimming over hospitality, and almost bursting with that impor- ce which has been described as "the fulness of joy hope," introduced his future son-in-law to the Lord utenant, to the High Sheriff, to a Judge who had a untry-house in the neighbourhood, and, amongst her persons, to "my nephew, Harold Dering." The inner went off as such dinners usually do; and towards the small hours most of the men who were staying in the house assembled in the billiard-room.

Now, Thornton could play pool extremely well; in act, it was a steady source of income to him. But he ad no chance whatever with Dering, who kept on learing the board with provoking and almost me- hanical precision. Thornton, who seemed to be much ken with him, and who had a genius for conversation, on managed to draw him out. He was a young fellow out five-and-twenty, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, ith tremendous limbs, sunburnt face and hands, crisp,

curling black hair, an immense beard, faultless
and a laugh as noisy and as merry as that of a s
boy.

He was utterly unlike any of the men in the
He was not of their type. He looked like what
—a colonist fresh from the diggings. But all
and most women would have pronounced hi
handsomest man of the company, and he was cert
the strongest. He strode round the table, and slou
over the cushions to make his stroke with all the
ease of a giant. He talked freely and unaffectedl
his adventures by field and flood, of the lions he
shot in the bush, of the hyænas he had speared, and
the large diamonds he had found or assisted in findi
Unlike most Cape colonists, he had not apparently
single diamond about him; but when the conversatio
turned on diamonds he unbuttoned his waistcoat
searched for his money belt, and produced a piece o
whitey-brown paper in which were wrapped som
dozen or so of uncut stones, lustreless as yet, b
evidently of enormous value.

It was quite true that he had been speared by t
natives, and he showed some ugly spear marks abo
the elbow, in the flesh of the right arm. It was al
true that he had been swept away by a flood wh
attempting to ford a stream. He spoke of all th
things as if they were everyday occurrences, and

[illegible]tly altogether devoid of anything at all like self-sufficiency.

[illegible]rzon and Thornton were going to bed, the [illegible]id:

[illegible]ould look after that South African, Curzon, if I [illegible]u. I had thought he was dead, and told you [illegible]ow he has unexpectedly turned up with a [illegible]-belt stuffed with diamonds. I do not wish to [illegible]en for a prophet of evil news, but I cannot avoid [illegible]easy suspicion that his presence here bodes you [illegible]articular good."

"What on earth do you mean?" asked Curzon, [illegible]ning shortly round on his heel in the corridor.

"Oh, nothing at all particular," replied Thornton. [illegible]t merely occurred to me that I had heard this [illegible]llow's name in connection with that of Miss Lloyd, [illegible]nd I thought it only right to tell you as much."

And with these words they parted for the night.

Early next day preparations commenced for the in- [illegible]ded theatricals. There were to be *tableaux vivants* [illegible]l part songs; and after these, "Othello" was to be acted. [illegible]ook some time to settle the caste of the tragedy. [illegible]ateur actors are very difficult to please. Ultimately, [illegible]ever, after much intriguing and jealousy, the part [illegible]thello was allotted to Curzon. He had had con- [illegible]able experience, and he was about the only person [illegible]e house at all capable of playing the part. He

was the only one who had not schemed to
with the exception of Thornton, who, ha
chosen by acclamation for Iago, had quietly
the *rôle*, and doggedly set to work to study it.

Miss Lloyd, of course, was Desdemona. Deri
offered the part of Roderigo, as being a happy-g
easy-hearted part, exactly suited to him. He d
it, however, on the sufficient ground that he
nothing of acting, and did not want to "spo
show."

The days slipped rapidly by. It was a Monday,
the theatricals were fixed for the following even
The ladies had retired for the night. The men
been shooting all day, and were most of them too ti
for billiards. A few of them were in the smoki
room—Curzon among them. Thornton came quietly
and touched his arm. The two left together, and n
body noticed the matter.

They stole noiselessly along the corridor till th
reached the large conservatory. The electric light
not yet been extinguished. The fountain was playi
The golden fins were flashing in the marble basin.
air was heavy with perfume. In a deep corner, u
the shadow of a huge tree fern, stood Ethel Lloyd
Harold Dering, face to face. His arms were round
and his hands locked behind her waist. One of
hands rested on each of his shoulders, and the two

kedly into each other's eyes. Curzon drew a
), silent breath. Thornton grasped him by
, and motioned him to be silent.

few seconds Curzon had heard everything.
d believed her cousin dead, and had consented
y himself in utter weariness of home and life.
s unexpected return, and his still more un-
ed reconciliation with her father, had been sudden
harp surprises. All the old love in her had leaped
ly out again into flame. Harold was no longer an
nturer. He was rich in any ordinary sense of the
. His yacht was lying at that moment in the bay,
ten miles from Tan-y-Bwllch Castle; and in the
nfusion after the theatricals were over the two were
steal away. And Curzon heard all this, and saw his
mised wife rest her head upon her cousin's broad
oulder and burst into a passion of tears—tears of joy
o intense for any other expression. And he turned
his heel and strode sharply along the corridor.
en re-entering the smoking-room, he filled a tumbler
h brandy and drank it off. Then he sat looking at
fire, and Thornton sat opposite to him. Neither
ke. But there the two sat till the fire faded away
o ashes, and the candles flared out in their sockets,
l the servants came in to clear the room.

* * * * * *

The day was old when Curzon and Thornton next

met. There was to have been a dress reh
Ethel had sent down word that she should n
to appear until the evening. Most of the p
were sufficiently perfect in their parts, havi
well drilled by a stage-manager brought do
London. So the rehearsal fell through. Der
taken a gun, and walked towards the shore—in
he explained, of curlew. Everybody was in a k
way doing nothing. It was a dull, wearisome *di*

Thornton followed his friend out on the t
where he was pacing up and down, with an old
between his teeth.

"What shall you do?" he asked.

"I can't tell until to-night," was the reply, "an
would prefer not to be talked to about it."

* * * * * *

The night came, and the play began. The audie
were entranced. Welsh squires and their families
not very difficult to please. The stage-manager f
London was in ecstasies. Never had an amat
company made such a success or done him gre
credit. Desdemona was not perhaps all that could h
been wished. There was a certain nervousness
coldness about her. But this, on the other hand, t
certain extent suited the part. Cassio was not ba
played by a young giant some six feet high, a barri
on the North Wales Circuit. Iago, by Thornton,

[redacted]on stage-manager declared, a marvel of careful
Curzon's Othello was perfect. He seemed
[redacted]l, and in the bedroom scene grew intense. At
he came to the glorious lines—

> "And say, besides, that in Aleppo once,
> Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
> Beat a Venetian, and traduc'd the State,
> I took by the throat the circumcisèd dog
> And smote him—thus."

his voice was still dwelling on the last word he
ped his sword by its hilt with his hands joined,
ed it above his head, drove the blade straight into
chest, and fell forward on his face, with the blood
hing from his mouth.

The women screamed and fainted, or went into
terics, or ran away. The men swarmed up on to
stage. The first to lift Curzon up was Dering.
ere was nothing to be said. The sword had been
ven with the whole strength of both arms right
ough the left lung, and the point stood out below
shoulder-blade.

Then they thought of Desdemona, startled, even in
ir wild excitement, by her strange silence. Those
o were nearest to the bed turned hastily and tore
de the curtains.

The play had been acted out. Desdemona was dead.

THE CAVE OF TROPHONIUS.

TIME: 12 A.M., Monday, June 8, 1885.

SCENE:—*The outer room of* MR. MAURICE LEVISON *Burlington Gardens. Easy chairs, sofas, the morn papers, Army and Navy List, Peerages, Directo the Red Book, the Blue Book, Burke's "Lan Gentry," &c. &c.—A boy in buttons is serving bra and soda.*

PRESENT:—CAPTAIN VANDELEUR, *of the 27th Ro Plungers,* THE HONOURABLE MR. ASTLEY SPA INGTON, VISCOUNT HOLLYCOURT, MR. WINDER, *the Odéon Theatre,* MR. JOHN SMITHERSON, *and oth They have all been laughing at a peculiarly racy st of* MR. WINDER'S, *and then suddenly relapsed i dismal apathy.*

VISCOUNT HOLLYCOURT. A most beastly week. had the straight tip for Paradox and put on my shi Then they made me back St. Helena, and I put on n night-gown and tooth-brush. Went to the goven on Saturday. Won't say where he told me to go

w, it was warmer than this place, and that's something. Went to him again yesterday g. Told me he was going to church, and I'd go too. Told him I should be posted at Tatter- and have to leave the regiment and my clubs. would be the best thing for me. Talked to e a father about the dishonour of the family Said I'd done that already—old thief. But I he's breaking.

PTAIN VANDELEUR. My tip was worse than yours, lear boy. I went neck or nothing on Crafton. are the invention of Satan; especially when they red-hot from the stable. I stood to win a couple ou., which would have made me comfortable. may guess how I stand now. And under the nt infernal system you can't raise money on your ission.

R. WINDER. Pardon, gentlemen. Hope I don't ide. I had the wrong tip myself. Derby Monday, here we are again. Isn't it odd? All I want is ndred. And if old Moses Levy won't let me have more boxes for him. Maurice Levison, indeed! new his father, old Sol Levy, when he had the of the house at the Shoreditch, and young Mo used to circumnavigate the pit with nuts and r-beer. But I'll work the oracle, no fear. Lay on, uff! If Mr. Mo Levy—— (*Sudden interruption,*

caused by the entry through a green baize door o
LEVISON'S *clerk, who whispers a few words to* VIS
HOLLYCOURT, *and retires again.*)

THE HONOURABLE MR. ASTLEY SPARKINGTON. I only want five hundred. But it is no good a my governor. He couldn't let me have it if he And I'm precious sure he wouldn't if he could. if old Judah Ben Israel here will do my little stiff, I'm all right; for I can manage to pay interest, and if I do that he will always renew. doesn't, I must give bills to the bookies. Then friend in the City will get them. Then there wi bankruptcy, sack from F. O., and general burst. N catch me backing a horse again. (*A general gro approval.*)

CAPTAIN VANDELEUR. But what are you here Smitherson? You never used to bet at Eton.

MR. JOHN SMITHERSON. No, I never did; and I d now as a rule. But I made a fool of myself this t Got the straight tip—Xaintrailles to wit! I thou of going abroad this summer for a bit, so I put pot on and over-boiled it. You know my gover Strictest Quaker in all Leeds. I daren't tell So here I am. Ah, Vandeleur! I wish we were at Eton.

VISCOUNT HOLLYCOURT. And only in debt for t

CAPTAIN VANDELEUR. Or you could lose your

and get an order for a new one, and then lose that. (*Lights a fresh cigar.*)

CONFIDENTIAL CLERK (*entering*). Lord Hollycourt. (*Retires with that nobleman.*)

THE HONOURABLE MR. SPARKINGTON. I say, Winder, what will you give on his chance? I don't think much of it. All the family land is in Ireland, and between Parnell and Gladstone Ireland is gone to the devil. I'll tell you what, I'll bet you a tenner it don't come off.

MR. WINDER. No tenners to lose, my dear boy; but I think it will. (*Whistles the Dead March in "Saul." Re-enter through private door* LORD HOLLYCOURT, *followed by* MR. MAURICE LEVISON *himself.* MR. MAURICE LEVISON *is attired in a diamond stud and several diamond rings, relieved by such minor accessories as varnished boots, white gaiters, a blue Newmarket coat, curled hair, obtrusive cuffs, and a crimson necktie.*)

MR. LEVISON. Good morning, my lord. Your Lordship shall hear from me at three o'clock precisely. Ah, Winder, my boy, how are you? Come in. Pleasure first; I always hate business.

[*Exeunt through private door* MR. LEVISON *and* MR. WINDER.

CAPTAIN VANDELEUR (*anxiously*). Well?

VISCOUNT HOLLYCOURT. Well! Had to give him a letter to my bankers. They're to let him know what

my private account has been for the last eighteen months. I think it will pass muster with old Israel, and if it does, he'll do the job. He's coming to me at the club at three. That looks like business. Besides, he's got to go to Tattersall's himself. I expect we shall go together. It will be a rare joke.

THE HONOURABLE MR. SPARKINGTON. Ah, Hollycourt, there's money in a title.

VISCOUNT HOLLYCOURT. Sometimes. Anyhow, there's always money in a money-lender, and if I—— (*Enter from the inner room* MR. WINDER, *with the step and manner of a Christian martyr going to the stake in red fire and limelight.*)

OMNES (*cheerfully*). Winder's done the trick.

MR. WINDER (*casts his eye round and drops his voice to a whispered imitation of the late Mr. Buckstone*). My dear boys, I've done the Jew. Le Jew est fait. Vive le Jew!" (*Rubs his hands and takes his departure in a comic double shuffle.*)

MR. LEVISON (*opening private door*). Captain Vandeleur.

HONOURABLE MR. SPARKINGTON (*as* Vandeleur *retires*). Now, I'll lay Vandeleur gets his money. He's not much of his own, it's true; but he has the run of Cheltenham House. He has great interest at the Horse Guards. He's safe of a command—Eike knows that, and Eike knows his customers.

VISCOUNT HOLLYCOURT. I hope he won't get what he wants, that's all; there'll be the less chance for me. Old Mo never likes to shell out too much in one day. Well, I'm off! (*Exit.*)

THE HONOURABLE MR. ASTLEY SPARKINGTON (*emphatically*). Selfish devil!

MR. SMITHERSON. Don't know him. But I like Vandeleur, and I hope he'll have luck. Why, talk——

Enter CAPTAIN VANDELEUR *through private door.*

SPARKINGTON and SMITHERSON. } Well?

VANDELEUR (*in whisper*). All right. Said he'd do it with the name of a man he named. That very man told me this morning he'd do anything; so I said to old Mo, "I can get his name at fifty, but not at more." Mo grumbled, and we settled at sixty. Off to fetch my man. Ta-ta.

CLERK (*through private door*). Mr. Sparkington.

(*During* MR. SPARKINGTON'S *absence* MR. SMITHERSON *walks up and down the room in a very agitated condition, consults the Directories and Army List, and betrays other signs of impatience. To him there enters through the public door and unannounced, a gentleman of Hebrew persuasion, who calmly sits down, lights a cigar and begins to read the papers. Re-enter through the private door* THE HONOURABLE MR. SPARKINGTON and MR. LEVISON.)

MR. LEVISON. Now, you've heard my last, Mr. Sparkington. I'll settle your book for you myself on our usual terms. But you don't get a cheque out of me. You'd only go down to Tattersall's and beg for time, and then you'd blew my cheque and come back to me when your time was up. Shall I settle your book, yes or no?

MR. SPARKINGTON. And twenty ready.

MR. LEVISON. Not a red cent.

MR. SPARKINGTON (*sulkily*). Then settle the book.

[*Exit.*

MR. LEVISON. Hullo, Jacobs, how are you? Ready for you in a moment. (*Turning to* MR. SMITHERSON.) My private solicitor, Mr. Smitherson. All confidential. I've considered your letter. Sorry I can't do your business. You see you didn't mention any one. And you're only in lodgings off St. James's Square. And I don't think much of the Junior Cam and Isis Club. It's no show. Good morning. [*Exit* MR. SMITHERSON.

MR. LEVISON. Well, Sidney Jacobs, how goes it? I'm just off to Tattersall's. Any news for me?

MR. JACOBS. There's news for *me*. Are you stark, staring mad?

MR. LEVISON. What do you mean?

MR. JACOBS. Who was that young chap you just kicked out?

MR. LEVISON. Don't know him from Adam. He don't

seem to have any friends. Says he's been to Eton and to Oxford. Wants two hundred. They've all been to Eton and Oxford. That cock won't fight.

MR. JACOBS (*solemnly*). You're an ass. You don't even know your own business.

MR. LEVISON. Don't I? I know it better than you do your dirty law.

MR. JACOBS. Do you? Well, I shall do that little bit myself. Ah, if young men would only come in the first instance to respectable professional practitioners!

MR. LEVISON (*angrily*). Stow your humbug! What do you mean?

MR. JACOBS (*gravely shaking his head in mock rebuke*). Levison, Levison! That mild young mug you've just kicked downstairs is the only son of Smitherson, Smitherson and Co., woollen warehouse at Leeds, and he hasn't a sister.

MR. LEVISON (*gaspingly*). Good God!

MR. JACOBS. Yes, Levison, yes. And he's the only nephew of Smitherson's patent manure works at Limehouse, and the manure works haven't a son. *I'm solicitor to the family.* So I took care he didn't catch sight of me.

MR. LEVISON (*at the top of his voice*). Benjamin! Benjamin! (*Enter confidential clerk.*) Benjamin, you scoundrel, run after that gentleman at once—Mr.

Smitherson. If you don't catch him up, go to his lodgings, go to his club, go everywhere. Tell him he can have a couple of thousand. Bring him back in half-an-hour, or you'll know why. And when you've found him, go to the Guards Club, and wait till Lord Hollycourt comes in, and tell him I'll do half, and not more. And now, Jacobs, business is over for the day. Light a cigar, and let's have a bottle of cham. and a biscuit before I go down to Tattersall's.

A MODERN ELECTION.

From Thomas Cheeseman, Esq., Wholesale Chandler, 32 Queen Victoria Street, E.C., to Messrs. Shortcroft & Raid, Lincoln's Inn Fields.

May 20, 1885.

SIR,—I have duly received your favour of yesterday's date. In answer, I beg to state that I still consider the price put upon the St. Maur Abbey Estate ridiculous high, and quite £10,000 more than I should have bid under other circumstances.

But as you say that if I don't close at once, Lord Rattlebury will, I'll give a point in your favour, and so the affair is settled.

Please prepare all necessary documents *as soon as possible*, and write me when I can call and sign.

I am, Sirs,

Yours obediently,

THOMAS CHEESEMAN.

P.S.—Having taken a fancy to the place, prompt attention to the above is politely requested.

From Lady Pursang, of The Towers, Slumberton, to the Rev. John Oldham, The Rectory, Slumberton.

September 5, 1885.

MY DEAR MR. OLDHAM,—Will you, or rather *can* you, dine with us to-night, *en famille*, at 8 o'clock?

Yours very truly,

LAURA PURSANG.

P.S.—You will never guess who called here yesterday! Those odious Cheesemans, who have just bought and re-decorated—or rather disfigured—dear old St. Maur Abbey. How I *do* pity poor Lady St. Maur! Of course *I* had not *dreamt* of calling upon *them*. But they came, nevertheless, principally, it seemed, to afford the dreadful man an opportunity of "'oping that, bein' neighbours, we should be friendly, drop in on each other" (!), and so on.

From the Rev. John Oldham to Lady Pursang.

September 5, 1885.

MY DEAR LADY PURSANG,—I shall be charmed to dine to-night. With regard to "the odious one," I must tell you that he is anything but "odious" in *my* eyes just now. This very morning I have received a cheque for £500 in aid of the Restoration Fund, and another for the same sum to be applied in the parish as

I think fit, enclosed in a letter signed, "Thos. Cheeseman."

But (in your own words), you will never guess how the letter comes to an end! "I am a plain man, and want no thanks. An acknowledgment *in the local paper* will *suffice*" (!!!). The italics are my own.

Very sincerely yours,

JOHN OLDHAM.

From Thomas Cheeseman, Esq., of St. Maur Abbey, to the Secretary, Slumberton Infirmary.

October 5, 1885.

SIR,—I have much satisfaction in enclosing a draft for £1,000 on my bankers in favour of the Borough Infirmary. As a local landowner I take the greatest interest in all local institutions. Being a plain man, I neither expect nor do I wish for thanks for doing my duty according to my means. An acknowledgment in the local papers will suffice.

Yours obediently,

THOS. CHEESEMAN.

Extract from the "Slumberton Sentinel," November 25, 1885.

Last Thursday the Vale of Heath hounds met on the lawn of St. Maur Abbey. The princely hospitality of the new owner, Mr. Cheeseman, extended not only to

the members of the Hunt and other usual recipients, but to the vast crowd of spectators. Casks of ale were broached, a plentiful meal was welcome to each and all, even the poorest, and "all went merry as a marriage bell." Sir Hubert St. Maur certainly left many a sorrowful heart when he quitted us; but there is no doubt that the present munificent lord of St. Maur is an acquisition of the greatest moment to a rising and go-ahead borough like ours. *On dit*, that, in the event of Colonel Tomkins' serious and long-continued illness deciding him to accept the Chiltern Hundreds, there *is* a somebody, not a hundred miles off, who *might* be induced to stand for the borough.

To the Electors of the Borough of Slumberton.

ST. MAUR ABBEY, *January* 2, 1886.

GENTLEMEN,—In consequence of the sad demise of your late lamented representative in Imperial Parliament his seat is vacant.

I have the honour to come forward as a candidate for that seat, and to solicit your votes.

I am a plain man, and therefore will address you plainly.

In politics, I say "Rule Britannia!" I am a Constitutionalist—that is, a good Liberal and no bad Conservative.

Interference with farmers is un-English, in my opinion.

Taxation should be alike for all.

I will vote against the admission of Atheists to Parliament; but otherwise will allow every man to think as he pleases.

In local matters I say, "Slumberton for ever!"

I have already done some little for Slumberton. Let Slumberton elect me, and I will do more.

Leaving my candidature in the hands of my intelligent and patriotic neighbours, and soliciting all their votes.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS CHEESEMAN.

Telegram from Henry Blobbs, Election Agent, 200 Great George Street, Westminster, S.W., to Thomas Cheeseman, Esq., Slumberton.

January 10, 1886.

Glad so many promises. Hope our men satisfy you. Report to-night that young St. Maur will contest. Carlton Club job.

Telegram from Thomas Cheeseman, Esq., to Henry Blobbs.

Let him come and try. Your men working to my satisfaction. Election a certainty.

Extracts from Special Edition of the "Slumberton Sentinel," January 13, 1886.

BOROUGH ELECTION.

STATE OF THE POLL.

12 noon.	Thomas Cheeseman	L. 372
	Aubrey St. Maur	C. 201
2 P.M.	Cheeseman	L. 585
	St. Maur	C. 497
3 P.M.	Cheeseman	L. 609
	St. Maur	C. 573
Close of the Poll.	St. Maur	C. 675
	Cheeseman	L. 629

Mr. Aubrey St. Maur, the Conservative candidate, and son of Sir Hubert St. Maur, the late owner of St. Maur Abbey, was therefore declared by the Mayor duly elected Member for the Borough of Slumberton by a majority of 46. The result was received by a vast crowd, apparently not wholly composed of Mr. St. Maur's supporters, with frantic and long-continued cheering.

A MILITARY MATCHMAKER.

I.

Mr. Moss Abrahams, better known to his more familiar friends as Ikey Mo, was the largest money-lender in London. His transactions were on a colossal scale. Except for a duke or some peer of lesser rank with absolutely faultless introductions, he would undertake no business that was not in thousands. He had a great house in Portland Place and another in Palmeira Square, Brighton. He owned racehorses and also a club or two, having been blackballed successively at the Union, the Reform, the Junior Athenæum, and the Devonshire. "Every gentleman," said Mr. Abrahams, "ought to belong to a club;" and so, as no club would have him, he started one or two on his own account, at which he was of course elected, and which paid him for his enterprise, both directly and indirectly.

Mr. Moss Abrahams was a great patron of the drama. Most lessees owed him money, or might at any moment want to do so, and he as rigorously insisted on his

private box for all first nights as if he were sole proprietor of a daily paper. His equipages were much admired. He had one or two steam-launches and a large steam-yacht, the *Miriam*. He banked with the Bank of England; and he always spent the season at Monte Carlo, where he lived at the Hôtel de Paris; seldom lost, and occasionally broke the bank. For the rest, he was a little, fat, vulgar man, with execrable taste. Having a very red face and very pronounced features, he used to dye his whiskers black, and in summer time to disport himself in white gaiters, white waistcoat, a bright blue necktie, and a Newmarket coat, with a priceless orchid in its button-hole; and thus apparelled he would swagger about in the Row, or strut into Tattersall's, or march down St. James's Street, staring in at White's, and Brooks's, and Boodle's, and Arthur's, and the Conservative, with the air of a man who could belong to them all if he pleased, but who scorned to do so.

"He is a most insufferable little cad, that Moss Abrahams," said Lord Grey de Melton, looking out of one of the windows at White's as Ikey paraded past with his Malacca cane shouldered like a sword.

"He's a rogue, who would be transported to-morrow if all his dirty doings were brought out," said the Honourable Oscar Snaffleton, of Her Majesty's 2nd Life Guards.

"What do you think he had the cheek to do the other day?" lisped little Bernard Duval, of the Foreign Office. "He went to Dolly, old Skudmore's son, you know, and said, 'Look here, my lord, you owe me five thousand.' Of course Dolly knew it, and of course Dolly couldn't pay it. 'Look here, my lord,' says Ikey, 'I'll show you I'm a gentleman. You get your father to put me up for the Royal Yacht Squadron. If I'm elected I'll hand you back all your stiff, and I'll give you a thou. into the bargain.'"

"I hope Dolly kicked him downstairs," said Lord Melton.

"I don't know," said little Duval; "but that's the story."

Meantime Mr. Abrahams had turned out of St. James's Street in the direction of St. James's Square, and entered one of his own clubs, where from the nominal proprietor down to the junior page, and the housekeeper to the lowest scullion, every employé held office at his nod. Something had evidently disquieted him, for he ordered a pint of champagne, although it was not yet one in the day, lit an immense cigar, and began to look at the ceiling. When a woman is making up her mind she looks at the ground; when a man is making up his mind he looks at the ceiling. I cannot tell you why it is so, but I know it to be a fact.

Mr. Moss Abrahams had a number of things upon his mind, all of which had concurred to annoy him; it is a way things have. In the first place, Adolphus Lapwing, eldest son of the Earl of Skudmore, had positively laughed at the idea of Mr. Abrahams seeking admission to the charmed circle of the Royal Yacht Squadron.

"Cuss his impudence," said Moss to himself between his teeth, "he shall pay for it. The *Miriam* hasn't her equal in the Solent, and I've spent thousands on her. The piano in the saloon is a Broadwood grand, and the glass, and plate, and china, and what not, are tip-top. Lazarus bought them in for me on purpose when we sold up Lord Swivvlechester. I'll go down there, though, this summer, if only to show them how I can do things; and I daresay there'll be a few of them will be glad to see me outside their cursed club." And Mr. Abrahams grinned.

But this was not the whole of his troubles. In the first place, he had some heavy charges on land from a young nobleman who had died at Malta shortly after coming into possession, and the administrators, together with the guardians of the infant heir, had actually been mean enough to bring a Chancery suit for an account, and for all manner of things unheard of between gentlemen; and had also actually gone to the length of imputing downright fraud to Mr. Abrahams, than

whom, as he used to boast, a more straightforward man never did business in a straightforward way.

"It's ungrateful, that's what it is," said Mr. Abrahams, as he took a pull at his champagne, "but I shan't trouble about it. I shall leave it all to Clinch and Cutter, and I suppose they'll be able to tell me what I've got to swear to, and get it down for me in black and white. I always hated law." This last remark was strictly true, for in early life, before Mr. Moss Abrahams had amassed sufficient capital to start as a bill-broker and discounter, he had been involved in some little transactions which a high judicial functionary had declared to amount to a very aggravated case of bill-stealing. Then, too, there was his daughter Miriam—his only child. Now, Miriam was obstinately bent on marrying a young fool called Philip Tancred, who lived in lodgings in Chelsea, and exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery, and whom she had met at parties, and with whom her father had absolutely forbidden her to communicate, and to whom her father would certainly never have lent a twenty-pound note without the additional security of a good name, having no faith in artists or literary men, or indeed in anybody except heirs to entailed estates, theatrical lessees, and men on the turf. Heirs to entailed estates he took a strictly commercial interest in, but he had also all the instincts of his race for gambling and for the drama.

Beyond these he had no tastes whatever. He liked a good dinner, however, and felt flattered, and at least a quarter of an inch taller and six square inches less bald, when in return for a certain number of guineas he was enabled to put F.R.G.S. after his name in the Royal Red-Book and on his cards, and to crowd with dukes and other "nobs" at the addresses of distinguished explorers. These were Mr. Moss Abrahams' cares, which somehow must have vanished by the time he had finished his champagne and thrown the stump of his cigar into the grate; for as he rose from his easy-chair and rearranged his orchid he distended his chest in the manner of a pouter pigeon, gave a cheerful cock to his curly-brimmed hat, assumed a military swagger such as may sometimes be observed in sergeant-majors of militia, and swore quite pleasantly at the waiter who humbly opened the door for his departure.

II.

Colonel Wynnstay Dampier, of the Blues, only son of old Mr. Dampier of Medlicott Hall, Hertfordshire, was heavily in such few books as the business of Mr. Moss Abrahams made it necessary for him to keep. He had commenced by borrowing a thousand pounds on a bill for fifteen hundred at six months, and so things had gone on until his debt amounted upon stamped paper to something like eighty thousand pounds.

Now, Mr. Moss Abrahams was a very clever man. But so, too, was Colonel Dampier. The eighty thousand pounds nominal debt represented something like twenty-five thousand pounds actually advanced. The rest was made up of interest, commission charges on renewal, and other such items, extending over many years. For Mr. Abrahams was a very clever man; so clever, indeed, that he had never pressed Colonel Dampier for a moment, or even suggested unpleasant proceedings. He had made most careful inquiries, and had paid heavily for secret information. He had ascertained that the Dampiers succeeded son after father to Medlicott Hall since the days of Elizabeth. He knew that he was practically Colonel Dampier's only creditor. So he was waiting on for the old Squire's death, when he intended to propose to the Colonel that all his bills should be burnt, and that he should marry Miriam.

"It's as good as if I gave him eighty thou. with her," said Mr. Abrahams; "although I know precious well it ain't quite twenty-five. But he don't know that; not he. He hasn't any idea. And she's a dam' good-looking girl, and had a splendid education. Plays the harp beautifully. She's fit to marry a coronet, she is."

But Mr. Abrahams had too much common sense to wish to see his daughter marry a coronet. To see her mistress of Medlicott Hall was quite sufficient for his ambition. It was a grand old Tudor mansion, with

stone terraces and oaks about it, and elms in which the rooks cawed; and Moss, who really loved his daughter, did not wish to see her married too much above her rank, although he could have matched her any day with a bankrupt earl. Medlicott Hall, he thought, was just about the proper place for her. And he was quite right; for Miriam Abrahams was tall and handsome; was well educated, intelligent, and sympathetic beyond most women of her age; gracious in manner, and very good and gentle. When she had become Mrs. Dampier, Moss proposed to retire from business, lest his occupation should embarrass his daughter and son-in-law, and render his own visit to the Hall a source of anxiety. He intended to realise; to take a house on the Terrace at Richmond; to spend the season at Monte Carlo as usual, and to keep his steam-yacht going during the calmer portions of the summer (he was never a very good sailor), in spite of the slight put upon that noble vessel and his important self by the Royal Yacht Squadron. And this was the way in which Mr. Abrahams used to count his eggs and reckon his chickens.

Now, Colonel Dampier, of the Blues, was a gentleman, but he was also a very shrewd man of business. He had, for instance, never been sufficiently foolish to have his name in the books of more than one usurer at a time, or to get entangled in an action for divorce or

breach of promise, or to have less than a thousand pounds to his credit at Cox's. He was a reserved man with but few friends. These, however, knew him, and could always trust to his kindness and generosity. He had borrowed money of Abrahams because he did not wish to distress the old Squire, who was economical in his habits, although not at all penurious or even close, and for whom he had a very great affection. But he knew to a penny what money he had had from Mr. Abrahams as well as did that gentleman himself, and he had made up his mind to pay the money-lender his twenty-five thousand pounds, with whatever interest he should deem fair, and not a penny more.

But there was also another matter that weighed with Colonel Dampier. Philip Tancred was his close personal friend. They had known each other from lads, and they had shared many curious adventures. Tancred, although he exhibited in the Grosvenor Gallery, was by no means an ethereal creature, for whom perfumes and music were sufficient sustenance. Where art was concerned he had all the sensitiveness of a woman. A touch of colour in the wrong place would at once give him the toothache, or, as ladies call it, neuralgia. But he was as sinewy and active as a greyhound. He had the heart of a schoolboy. He would tumble out of bed at any hour to net a river, or trap a badger, or steal the advantage of a slight

breeze that had sprung up during the night, and was sufficient to lift the yacht four knots an hour. He could swim like an otter; he had picked up a little fencing in Paris; he could ride across country, even in a steeplechase; he could drive tandem, which is much more difficult, if you will take my word for it, than four-in-hand; and he was considered one of the twenty best tennis-players in Europe. In addition to this he also came of a good old English family, although, as a younger son, his income was extremely small. Dampier liked Tancred, and Tancred liked Dampier; and Dampier had, in a kind of way, promised Tancred that if he would let things take their course and not unduly trouble himself, he should marry Miriam, daughter of Moss Abrahams, Esquire.

Tancred, who had absolutely no knowledge of the world, trusted implicitly in Dampier. Dampier, who had considerable knowledge of the world, trusted implicitly to himself.

"He ought to be very happy," said the Colonel, "if he gets back my twenty-five thousand pounds, with interest on it, settled on his daughter, and a good husband for her like dear old Philip. Bless his dear old nose!"—(only this was not the exact phrase the Colonel used)—"it's a very much better chance than he had any right to expect. I think he ought to give me a liberal commission; I do indeed." And

Colonel Dampier tumbled into his little soldier's bed, and dreamed that the whole of the North-West Provinces had been invaded by an army of Parsee bill-discounters, and that he and the Duke of Cambridge and the Lord Mayor had been sent out with a flotilla of torpedo boats to save India, and that the campaign had been stopped by telegraphic orders from Downing Street because there did not exist in the world a sufficient supply of orchids to allow every English officer to go into battle with a flower in his button-hole worthy of his rank. This may seem nonsense; anyhow, it is what Colonel Dampier dreamed.

III.

Early next morning Colonel Dampier, while strolling about his room in his pyjamas, and discussing a moderate breakfast of tea and dry toast, received a telegram which made him ring his bell violently. His servant obeyed the summons, and in a few minutes the Colonel was on his way to the Horse Guards. Here he saw certain officials, and left an application for a fortnight's leave of absence. Within a few hours after this he was at Medlicott Hall. Medlicott Hall was sorely troubled. Old Squire Dampier had been suddenly stricken down with paralysis. The best local doctors were present in the hall, and there were two

consulting physicians from London. But the confraternity all shook their heads. Squire Dampier, during the course of his dinner, had been seized all at once with utter powerlessness of the right side of his body. He had lifted his fork with his left hand, but had been unable to use his right arm to grasp his knife. He had risen from his chair, but his right leg had given way under him, and he had fallen heavily to the ground. He was now more or less unconscious. He did not even recognise his son. His left arm was all that he could move, and with that he feebly tried to beat time on the counterpane.

The principal London doctor took Colonel Dampier out, and asked him to join him in a walk under the verandah.

"Your father, Colonel Dampier," said the great medical man, "will never recover consciousness. A large blood-vessel has broken on the brain, and there has been another rupture in the spinal cord, producing hemiplegia. Do you know if your father has left a will; for I ought to tell you that he is not now competent to make one?"

Colonel Dampier laughed lightly—a laugh not sufficient to break the solemnity of the question.

"There has not been a will with us Dampiers, Sir Matthew," he answered that eminent physician, "since the days of Elizabeth. Medlicott Hall has always

gone from the father to the eldest son. We have been a united family, and have never disputed about portions, or charges, or settlements and division of the personalty, and have never had to call in the appraiser to determine the value of the plate and china. I am perfectly certain my father has left no will whatever. I am his only child, and the only representative of the household. Everything will come to me as a matter of course. I shall never marry, and when I die the property must go as the Crown lawyers please."

Sir Matthew bowed assent, and intimated that as he had now laid his views fully before Colonel Dampier, he thought it would be most advisable that he should see the old gentleman once again and then depart for town.

So Sir Matthew earned another ten guineas for another consultation, and went home to Sackville Street, and Colonel Dampier sent a telegram off by a groom, with instructions to gallop as hard as he could to the nearest station. The telegram ran to this effect:—

From Dampier,
Medlicott Hall,
Hertfordshire,

To Philip Tancred,
Cheyne Rialto,
Chelsea.

Come down at once. The old man is dead already. Put everything aside.

And then Colonel Dampier, who not only loved his father, but liked him (and liking between men is a good deal stronger than love), lit a cigar and walked up and down the terrace on the south side of the house. He knew the whole story. He was entirely the master of the situation. When his father died—which was probably a matter of hours—he would not have a relative in the world; and he had only one friend for whom he at all cared, Philip Tancred. Philip must marry Miriam—that was clear. Philip wished it, and Miriam wished it; and so the thing must be done. As for himself, his command as Colonel would expire in six months. He did not intend to make any application for further employment: he should take a yacht and roam the world.

Thirteen years before this, Dampier had fallen in love, and had been treated as many men are treated who believe a girl and her parents. He was cured for ever of any such follies. He knew his own mind, and he valued his own liberty. With the whole world now before him he would chase walrus in the Kara Sea, the grizzly in the Rocky Mountains, the ounces in the ranges of Afghanistan, the elephant in the jungles of Ceylon, and the tapir in the swamps of the Bornese Archipelago. He saw before him an absolutely infinite future of delight. Twenty years of hunting in all climates, to be followed by a peaceful

old age in England as a county magistrate, master of foxhounds, and member of half a dozen of the best London clubs.

That night the old Squire passed peacefully away. He recovered consciousness just before his death, and was able to whisper to the Colonel, who sat by the bedside, with the old man's hand in his, "God bless you, my dear boy. I am proud to leave behind me such a representative of the old name. Good-bye, Wynn." A mutual pressure of the two hands followed. Colonel Dampier kissed his father's forehead. A sigh of blended satisfaction and relief escaped the Squire's lips, and all was over.

The next few days were passed in making preparations for the funeral, and Colonel Dampier received much assistance and consolation from his old friend, Philip Tancred, who arrived at the Hall just before Mr. Dampier's death. On the morning after the funeral, Colonel Dampier called on the lord of the manor, Sir Wilfred Blundell. Sir Wilfred was the same age as the Colonel, and had been with him at Harrow, and also in the Blues, but had retired from the service on his marriage some ten years previously.

Now, Medlicott Hall was copyhold, and was held from father to son, subject to a fine being paid to the lord of the manor. And if this fine were not paid within ten days of the death of the tenant for life,

the estate would be forfeited. Dampier explained to Blundell exactly how he found himself situated, and it was at once agreed that the fine should not be paid, and that the copyhold should lapse. Immediately after the Squire's death Mr. Abrahams began to press for his money. His letters, however, remained unanswered, and when Messrs. Clinch, Cutter, Moses, Shadrach, and Clinch commenced proceedings against the Colonel, they were compelled to inform their client that a forfeiture of the estate had taken place, and that the lord of the manor had taken possession.

Poor Ikey tore his hair, and alternatively swore and cried. The man must be mad, he said. If he had wanted any more money he could have had it. There was only one thing to be done. He must go down himself to the Hall, and see if he could come to terms with Sir Wilfred. And accordingly he went down to Medlicott Hall, and at the entrance of the Park who should he see but Colonel Dampier strolling along with Philip Tancred. It is difficult to say which he hated most at that moment, his daughter's suitor or the Colonel. He stopped his fly, and rushed up to the two men, almost speechless with excitement.

"What do you mean by this business? You have robbed me! I'll prosecute you! I'll let you and that precious beggar with you—who, I'll take my oath, has been in the conspiracy—know what I can do. My people

shall apply for a warrant to-morrow. If it costs me ten thou., I'll ruin you. I'll have the Attorney-General. I'll have Charles Bustle. I'll have George Trueis. I'll have Montagu——"

"Poor old chap," said the Colonel laughing, "I think that I can spare you a good deal of this expense. Listen to me. Be reasonable. I know what money I've had as well as you do. I've kept a note of everything. Now, I'm willing to return your money and twenty-five per cent. interest. And I will do so on one condition, and on one condition only, and that is, that you allow your daughter to marry my friend Philip. They are devotedly attached to each other, and you have no right to come between them. I am going away—at least I shall do so directly after the wedding—and they can live here as much as they please."

"But you've lost the estate. How can you let anybody live here?"

"We shall see about that. Do you accept my offer? That's the present question," replied the Colonel.

And Mr. Moss Abrahams did accept the Colonel's offer; and the lord of the manor accepted Dampier as a fresh copyholder on the roll; and the handsome Miriam became Mrs. Tancred; and the wedding took place at the parish church at Medlicott, in the presence of the whole county, from the lord-lieutenant down to

the smallest farmer; and Old Ikey, who had settled a hundred thousand pounds upon his daughter, was delighted to find every one very civil to him.

On the night of the wedding, in the smoking-room, when every one had gone to bed but the Colonel and himself, Ikey said, "To-day has been the only really happy day I have ever had in my life. I must thank you, Colonel, for this; neither you nor the young people shall find me ungrateful. Good-night."

THE NEW INN.

"VEL PROCHYTAM PRÆPONO SUBURRÆ."

SCENE:—*The "Green Dragon," near Shooter's Hill. In front of the house is a large lawn with immense chestnuts running down to a pleasant trout stream. Higher up is a stone bridge, and beyond it an old mill. In the distance is the village church. The coffee-room windows look out upon an exquisite garden. Add, according to taste, poultry, pigeons on the roof, ostlers in their shirts, chambermaids in muslin caps, &c. Enter from a fly,* MR. QUICKETT, *of the firm of Quickett, Driver, Quickett and Leech, Solicitors, of Lincoln's Inn Fields; and* MR. SNELSON, *of the firm of Messrs. Snelson, Ledger and Co., Chartered Accountants, of Colcman Street.*

MR. QUICKETT (*he is fifty-five years of age, stout, double gold eye-glass, heavy watch-chain, and black band to hat; the family solicitor all over. He addresses the young lady at the bar*). Brandy cold, please, miss. And you, Snelson, the same I suppose. Let me see the landlord, please. We have to drive over to Twelve

Elms Park, and want dinner on our return. (*The young lady calls the landlord, who comes in from the garden. He is about forty-five, tall, sunburnt, and looks suspiciously like a country gentleman.*)

MR. Q. Er—landlord, my friend and I have to go over to Twelve Elms. And—er—we want dinner at four. A little bit of fish, and a roast fowl, and an omelette, or something of that sort, and some cheese-fingers. Warm a bottle of your best claret, and have a bottle of port that you can thoroughly recommend carefully decanted. The job will stand that, Snelson, as "incidental expenses."

MR. SNELSON (*he is tall, thin, bilious, with carefully trimmed whiskers, of age absolutely uncertain, and with all the appearance of a City man in heavy business*). I hope so, I'm sure (*chuckles*). In fact, I know as much.

MR. Q. And a cigar, please. You don't smoke, I think, Snelson. No. Why (*taking cigar from landlord*), God bless my soul, it's Mr. Hardwicke Percival!

LANDLORD (*laughing heartily*). At your good service, Mr. Quickett.

MR. Q. Well! (*gasps*) Well! Of all—of all!—— Well! I knew you'd left the Bar, but I though you'd gone abroad—to Heidelburg. Well! I *am* surprised.

MR. P. And why?

MR. Q. Well, you know, it seems so odd. You a

University man, too. And your father with his position. And just as you were beginning to get into business. In a few years you would have had a good chance of silk. Well! Really!

MR. P. I don't see it, Quickett, at all. I'd quite as soon keep an hotel as be in the wine trade, like the son of a noble Duke we know; or on the Stock Exchange, as his cousin is. Keeping an hotel is an honest business and a profitable one. I like it quite as much as I should like banking, which is only pawnbroking and moneylending on a big scale, and in a swagger manner. You would not have been astonished if I had gone into a bank. Why should you think the worse of me because I am keeping a public-house? Money is the only thing in these days.

MR. S. (*sententiously*). Too true, I fear. Land is depreciating terribly—depreciating terribly. (*Scrutinizes critically a large photograph of Twelve Elms Park, hanging in the bar, and becomes absorbed in it.*)

MR. Q. Well, well, but you were doing well at the Bar, you know; and the Bar is a profession for a gentleman. Every young barrister (*shakes his head judicially*) has the chance of being a judge, or even Chancellor. Besides, with your father's influence, you would have been certain of a County Court judgeship.

MR. P. I quarrelled with my father, Quickett.

MR. Q. (*whistling*). The deuce, you did! Why?

MR. P. Because I insisted on coming here. He said I was a blackguard, and was disgracing the family; and I told him I would not take that language from any one—and I won't.

MR. Q. (*cautiously*). Well, well, I don't like strong language—I never did; but I think it's a great pity—don't you, Snelson?

MR. S. (*who is now absorbed in some plans of Twelve Elms Park which he has produced from his pocket*). Eh? Oh, yes! Oh, certainly! Most certainly! (*Resumes his study of plans.*)

MR. Q. And especially when you were getting on so well. Why, our list of fees used to be nearly a hundred guineas a term.

MR. P. Right you are, my dear Quickett; and I had my cheque from you three times a year. But you were about the only client who did pay regularly—I might almost say the only one who paid at all. You don't know how I was robbed.

MR. Q. (*with an air of superior solvency*). I can guess. I am quite aware that certain members of my branch of the profession——

MR. P. Exactly so. And, besides, you must admit, Quickett, that the Bar is going to the deuce. For every brief to be held there are twenty men fighting for it; and the fees, except for a very few men, are getting smaller and smaller. Look at Chuckster now. He's a

good man. He's had silk for fifteen years, and you know that you can command him any day for five guineas.

MR. Q. (*emphatically*). It's true.

MR. P. Yes. *You* don't charge five guineas, Quickett, for coming down here to-day to throw your eye over Twelve Elms. I'll bet you a bottle your price is more like twenty. And so is Mr. Snelson's.

MR. S. (*roused from his map*). Eh! Oh, certainly! As senior partner, I consider my day entitles me to thirty guineas and my expenses. (*Resumes study of map.*)

MR. P. (*lighting one of his own cigars*). Well, you see, there it is, Quickett. I had been about twenty years at the Bar, and I found I was making about £800 a year gross. I am not vain. But I know I've good abilities, and I know I liked law. Take off expenses of chambers and circuit, and what was left me; I couldn't educate my family on it. And I had to work like a slave. Chambers and courts every blessed day from ten to five. And I hate London, and like the country. I had a little money of my own, as you know, so I bought this place—it's a pretty place, with plenty of grounds—and now (don't be afraid I shall overcharge you and Mr. Snelson) I am saving money every year. My two boys are at Rugby. I have a little house at Eastbourne for my wife and girls in the

summer. I have glorious country air. I grow my own fruit and vegetables, keep my cows, feed my own pigs, shoot and fish, and in the hunting season get a couple of days a week with the hounds. I potter about all day long, and I am as happy as a man need be. My life is insured, and if I die to-morrow the business will fetch a good deal more than I gave for it.

MR. Q. But how about Mrs. Percival and the young ladies? How do they like it? Surely they were brought up to a different style of life.

MR. P. Well, you see, that was a little difficult. But there is a private door to the house, and not one of them has ever been inside the bar, or knows how to draw a glass of ale. After I had been here a month or so, the parson found out who I was. Being an hotel-keeper, I belong to the superior branch of the profession. I am no ordinary licensed victualler. Then I was elected guardian and parish vestryman; and then the parson's wife called. My wife has her pony carriage, and she and the girls get quite as much society as they want, especially at Eastbourne. I don't blink matters. I make no secret of what I am and what I have been; and I find people take me for what they are kind enough to think I am worth. I had a case the other day in the County Court, and argued it myself. The judge recollected me. He was as jolly as possible. Came and dined with us, and I drove him over in my

dog-cart to catch the night mail. He had a look at my poultry and pigs; praised my mulberries and peaches; and, as I am a sinner, said he envied me.

MR. Q. (*meditatively*). Well, my dear Percival, it's an odd way of looking at things; but perhaps you are right. I know I should like to retire myself. You know my little place at Ascot. Well, I can't get down there for more than two or three days at a time. There are a lot of nobs among our clients, and they would get huffed in a minute if I didn't look to their business personally. They won't be put off with Driver, whose manners are not what they might be, and Leech is too young for them. But have you no ambition left?

MR. P. Not a bit, except it be to live a quiet, happy, and healthy life. My business gives me no real trouble; I only boss it. I should not have come out of my parlour, if you had not asked for me. I have all my books, and I read a good bit in the winter time. The country round here is splendid if you're fond of natural history. I have quite enough to do. Now, law makes the mind most infernally rusty.

MR. Q. Well, my dear sir, perhaps you are right. Every man knows his own business best. I am sorry, I must say. I had hoped to see you on the Bench some day, but Heaven only knows when it might have been. Anyhow, you'll forgive an old man for telling

you that you were always a gentleman, and never possibly could be anything else. And now, Snelson and I must be off to Twelve Elms. Good-bye for the present.

MR. P. (*bowing with mock deference*). Good-bye, gentlemen both. The dinner shall be ready.

* * * * * * *

So Quickett and Snelson drive to Twelve Elms, and negotiate a heavy mortgage on it, and find that the fly has been stored with creature comforts; and on their return they find that they are to dine with Percival, who gives them a dinner of his own ordering, with his best wine. And after dinner they join the ladies, and have some music, and Percival drives them over to the station in his own phaeton at a tremendous pace, and they are soon rolling up to town by the express.

MR. Q. A capital dinner and capital wine. I am sorry the young woman in the bar refused to give us a bill, but clearly he thought us his guests. (*Opens basket.*) These cucumbers are splendid. Look at the asparagus—and here's seakale for you.

MR. S. A capital dinner, certainly.

MR. Q. And a capital fellow, Percival. Ah!' he might have been anything if he had liked. Well, he seems happy enough, anyhow, and his wife and daughters are charming. Eh, Snelson?

MR. S. Oh! Ah! Yes, certainly.

MR. Q. Charming. I shall certainly go down there again some Sunday, take a dozen fellows with me, and have a thundering good dinner for the benefit of the house. (*Resigns himself to sleep, while* MR. SNELSON *again pulls out his maps.*)

A MODERN JUDGE.

MR. JUSTICE JONES is keeping his sixtieth birthday. He has not celebrated it by a dinner-party. Lady Jones is in her own room, and is suffering from neuralgia. His eldest son is in Buller's column. His second son is at Liverpool, where he is flourishing immensely as a local barrister. The numerous daughters of Mr. Justice Jones are all married, and living in different parts of the world, one in a villa at Torquay, another at Hyderabad, another at a rectory in the Lincolnshire fens, another at Brussels. All his children have written him the usual letters. But, none the less, his lordship is lonely. He has had his soup, and his slip and his cutlet, and he has done his duty by his pint of port. But he feels as if he would like an hour at pool or a rubber at whist. He wishes he belonged to the Garrick or the Union, instead of the Athenæum. A sort of strange frenzy steals into his brain, prompting him to ask the butler to take a chair, and light a cigar, and have a talk. Why should he not go to the theatre, or even to the music-hall? Why

not? But he is very tired, is Mr. Justice Jones. So he sits in his easy-chair, and he looks at the fire, and he thinks.

First, he remembers his old school-days—how he got the medal for Latin verse, and the pewter pot for the quarter-mile swimming race, and how he secured a scholarship, and took his first-class in Moderations, and played in the college eleven, and took his first-class in Greats, and entered at the Inner Temple, and got his Fellowship at Balliol. Those were bright and cheerful days. Then came the drudgery of a Pleader's chambers, with their interminable shelves of reports. Then he remembers how he went sessions and circuit, and defended prisoners who had stolen eggs, or won money by the confidence trick, or mistaken some one else's house for their own, or broken the ribs of a county constable. And then came London business, with its pickings—a brougham smashed up by an omnibus; a money-lender who has exceeded his powers under a bill of sale; the cook who sues the licensed victualler for breach of promise of marriage; the suburban householder who has got into a row with the jobbing builder over qualities and quantities; the butcher whose account has been disputed. It was all practice, of course. But how miserable and dull and flat and unprofitable it all was! It paid, however, and Mr. Justice Jones remembers how he found

himself making £700 a year, and able to give up his Fellowship and marry Miss Edith Bumble, daughter of the second partner of Cobb, Dobbs, Bumble, Davis, Quicksetter and Sharp, of the Old Jewry (Cobb had been dead for twenty years, but the name still brought clients). Miss Edith Bumble, now Lady Jones, was not exactly intelligent, nor altogether sympathetic. But the income of Mr. Jones leaped from £700 a year to a handsome total in four figures, and by the time he was forty he had taken silk.

To do him justice, he had been a sound lawyer, and had deserved the success which had come to him in this somewhat roundabout way. He had a clear head. He knew his case law. He could write a clear and sensible opinion. He could address a jury in lucid and ordinary English. He could talk over an arbitrator, and he could now and again teach the judges in Banc their business. Nobody doubted his ability, or his energy, or his straightforwardness and courage. Nobody was astonished when he moved from Curzon Street to Prince's Gate, or when Mrs. Jones took to a two-horse victoria, or when he became member for the immaculate borough of Great Kiddington, or when his portrait was hung in the Royal Academy, or when he bought himself a little estate in Essex, and sent his boys to Eton. And yet how dull his life had been! Consultations at 9; robing-room at 10; court at 10.30.

Jury case before Mr. Baron Blunderstone, in which he signally defeats Proser, Q.C. Then lunch—sandwiches, and some sherry from his flask. Then an argument in Banc, in which—in his turn—he is utterly routed by Mr. Serjeant Jorkins, whose masterly exposition of the law with regard to ancient wells elicits compliments from the Bench, and produces a profound article in the *Times* of the next morning. Then chambers, dusty and dirty, with even the morocco chairs and bookcases looking dingy. Consultation follows upon consultation. Then a quick cab to Prince's Gate, and a dull dinner; and after dinner, briefs and tea, and perhaps a cigar until nearly midnight. And next morning, the robing-room again.

There is a pleasant side to the picture. The guineas rolled in. The banker's account took care of itself. The senior clerk wore a thick gold chain. But it was a terrible treadmill. No time to dine out. No time to read even the papers, much less current books; hardly time to keep posted up in the law reports. It had been a positive relief to Mr. Jones, Q.C., when Long Vacation came, and he could go down to Essex, and stroll about his estate, and look at his ducks and cattle, and watch the progress of his trees, and jolt about the roads on his weight-carrying cob.

He was fifty-two when he was made a judge, and everybody said it was a capital appointment. He had

saved money, but it was a nuisance to find his income drop suddenly by some few thousands a year. And now his work is more monotonous and tiring than ever. He has to sit in chambers and to decide points that are the very A B C of litigation. He has to sit in Court, and keep counsel in order and preserve his own dignity, and preserve his own temper over disputes that are as devoid of all human interest as is a fossil of life. He feels as if he were a successful general sent with a hundred militiamen and two guns to capture a farmhouse which the farm labourers are holding with their pitchforks; or an explorer who, on returning from Thibet, or the Amazons, or equatorial Africa, is told off for two years to take soundings in the Serpentine and report upon the peculiarities of its bottom; or a senior wrangler who has to hear day after day a more than usually dull third form stumble through the second book of Euclid. He is now sixty, and there are seven more years before him of this toil of Sisyphus. He has had none of the pleasure out of life that other men have had. His time has never been his own. He has been to Paris once or twice, and to Mentone and to Rome, in much the same mechanical way as he has been to Brighton and to Scarborough. But all his real tastes and wishes have remained unfulfilled, and have died out of him, exactly as the fire is dying out in the grate at which he looks. From "the wild joy of living" he has been utterly cut

off. Of hunting, of shooting, of yachting he can tell nothing. When he went down to the House of Commons he was always too tired to do more than to vote steadily with his party, and now and again make a solid speech of fifteen minutes. He has never seen the southern sea break over a coral reef; he has never sat under the shade of palm-trees nor seen the big game fall to his own rifle. He might have been behind a counter selling calico by the yard or butter by the pound, for all the real enjoyments that life has yielded to him.

And now he is only one judge among many. He is not quite so self-assertive as are some of his legal colleagues. The daily papers occasionally take him to task. The Court of Appeal puts him right vexatiously over trumpery matters of detail. The Attorney-General, whom he can remember as a junior at the Middlesex Sessions and the Mayor's Court, is very frequently impertinent to him. The only comfort is that he is still in good health, and has an assured income. Seven years is a long time to wait for his pension; but according to David he will then have three years left him, and according to the Carlisle tables of mortality, eight. He can then go down into Essex and grow roses, and breed poultry, and revive his old acquaintance with the classics, and drive about in a pony carriage, and enjoy the supreme pleasure of doing nothing. And at this point Mr. Justice Jones

discovers that the fire is out, and his feet are cold, and his pint of port is finished. And he recollects that at half-past ten to-morrow morning he has to deliver judgment in the interminable case of the Peddlington District Board of Works *v.* McTavish. And he slowly and sadly goes up to bed.

"

UNIVERSITY DISCIPLINE.

SCENE:—*The rooms of the* REV. THEOPHILUS ONESIMUS TWENTYMAN, *in the great quadrangle, St. Margaret's, Oxbridge. The rooms are oak panelled, carved oak bookcases, richly bound books, thick Turkey carpet; line engravings from the Old Masters, portfolio of photographs in stand, some choice oil paintings, large chimney clock, &c. Mullioned windows looking on to private garden of the* WARDEN *of St. Margaret's.* MR. TWENTYMAN *is discovered in his academic gown, seated in morocco chair at morocco-covered writing table. Enter* MR. REGINALD FIREBRACE, *decorously attired.*

...

MR. TWENTYMAN (*mechanically*). Sit down, Mr. Firebrace. I am sorry that I have to complain of your conduct very seriously. Your attendance at chapel is most irregular. Four days last week you did not return to college until twelve o'clock. On the other three (*consulting his memoranda*) I find that you entertained friends at dinner. You have persistently absented yourself from the Greek Testament lecture. Mr.

Towser informs me that your attendance at his Virgil lecture is most unsatisfactory. And Mr. Slight has written to complain that you have never attended his Algebra lecture at all.

(MR. FIREBRACE *looks up and down, settles his scholar's gown on his shoulders, and runs his fingers through the assel of his cap.*)

MR. T. (*continuing*). These are serious complaints, Mr. Firebrace. You hold a valuable scholarship, and the college expects you to set an example. Should your conduct not amend, a college meeting will be the inevitable result.

MR. F. (*apologetically*). I assure you, sir, I am working as hard as I can.

MR. T. (*austerely*). Impossible, sir, when you do not attend your college lectures, and neglect the excellent advice given you by Professor Burrows in his "Pass and Class" on the salutary effects of regular attendance at divine worship.

MR. F. (*looking through the open window upon the lawn where the* EARL OF PIMLICO *and* SIR HUGH CARLYON *are playing lawn-tennis with the daughters of the* REVEREND THE WARDEN). There are other undergraduates than myself, Mr. Sub-Warden, whose attendance at lectures is by no means constant.

MR. T. (*getting red in the face*). Sir, Lord Pimlico and Sir Hugh Carlyon are not in your position. They

do not hold a scholarship from the college imposing upon them corresponding obligations.

MR. F. (*desperately*). No, sir. Neither of them could get a scholarship if he tried, and I suppose that is why they are allowed to do just as they please.

MR. T. (*raising his voice angrily*). Mr. Firebrace!

MR. F. (*with the air of a man who expects the worst*). Yes, sir. I know that I have got a scholarship, and I tell you candidly that the reason I do not attend college lectures is because I cannot afford the time.

(MR. T. *is absolutely paralyzed with astonishment.*)

MR. F. (*feeling that he has crossed the Rubicon*). Yes, sir. Why should I waste three hours a week with Mr. Towser, attending a Pass Virgil lecture? I have a great respect for Mr. Towser. He has been very kind to me; but he took his degree thirty years ago. I forget now what sort of degree it was. I am at work this term on Lucretius with my private tutor, and I cannot afford the time for Virgil, even if I had not gone through him three times before I left Eton. I don't think even *you*, sir, could take down your Forbiger and puzzle me badly. (*Perceiving that* MR. TWENTYMAN, *who took a high degree himself, is a little mollified by this compliment*) And then, sir, really it is waste of time to put me into Mr. Slight's Algebra. I went as far as the calculus at school.

MR. T. (*judicially*). Mr. Firebrace, you should have explained these facts to these gentlemen.

MR. F. I did to Mr. Slight, sir, and his answer was that during the first year elementary algebra is compulsory; and I hadn't the heart to tell Mr. Towser the truth (*getting bolder*), so I thought the easiest way was to cut the lectures altogether. I'm telling you the simple fact, sir. Now, if I were at Balli——

MR. T. (*suddenly and severely*). Sir, I am astounded that you should presume to institute a comparison between St. Margaret's and any other college, even Balliol. It is our rule here that scholars on the foundation should attend the college lectures. Besides, sir, you are in receipt of charity. You have a scholarship of £80 a year, and yet you live riotously and extravagantly. You entertain as if you were a man of position, and I am told you hunt.

MR. F. (*turning red and white, and red again*). Certainly, sir, and my father knows it.

MR. T. (*imperiously*). Then your father ought to be ashamed of himself.

MR. F. (*rising to his feet, and thrusting his hands into his pockets*). Look here, Mr. Twentyman. You may say what you like of me; but you had better not say a word against my father in my hearing. (MR. TWENTYMAN, *who had been about to rise precipitately, sits down again.*) My old father knows exactly how I live. I

don't owe a penny in the 'Varsity. I'm not like Pimlico out there, whom old Mottle Jacobson won't trust with a hundred. What do you mean by telling me that I live on charity? I have £80 from the college, and I pay it £30 a year for tuition and £18 for room rent; I should like to know how I am to live on the balance.

MR. T. (*putting on his college cap*). You may go, sir. And you will please remain in your own rooms until two o'clock. I shall lay your conduct before a college meeting.

MR. F. (*undaunted*). No, Mr. Twentyman; you have accused me of living on charity. It's you who live on charity. Your fellowship is £300 a year; and you get your rooms, and your dinners, and everything else for nothing. And you have £500 a year for your tutorship. And all you do is to lecture twelve hours a week for eight months in the year, and to insult young fellows like myself, who are really trying to be a credit to the college.

MR. T. (*rising to his feet and waving his hand*). Leave the room, sir! As Sub-Warden of this college, I tell you that you may consider your scholarship forfeited, and if the college takes my advice, you will most certainly be expelled.

MR. F. Very well, Mr. Twentyman. My father won't break his heart. As for me, I don't care which college it is, or which university. I shall stand for

Balliol, and I hope I shall get it, thanks to Eton and not to St. Margaret's. And if you'll take my advice, you will spend next long in freshening up your Æschylus. The Medicean Manuscript is in the Vatican, you know. You are fond of Rome, I believe.

[*Bows and exit.*

Scene changes to the room of the WARDEN'S *Lodge. Enter the* WARDEN *and* MR. TWENTYMAN *in consultation.* MR. T. *is tremulous with anger; the* WARDEN *is firm and judicial.*

THE WARDEN. It won't do, my dear Twentyman; it won't do. We can't expel him, you know, for nothing more than being insolent to you.

MR. T. *Most* insolent, Mr. Warden.

THE WARDEN. Yes, yes, yes. But then there's nothing else. As for the lectures, why, I always *did* think the Greek Testament lecture was waste of time. If you gave them the Epistles of St. Paul, now. But boys ought to do their gospels at school. And as for Towser's Virgil, why, between you and me, Towser is a little behind the time. And Firebrace is a bright lad, too. I was dining with the Vice-Chancellor last night, and the Public Orator told me that the Latin verse lies between him and that dreadful Scotchman—McCandlish, of Orkney Hall. I am sure I hope it will come to St. Margaret's.

MR. T. But the bad example, Mr. Warden. Mr. Firebrace's extravagance!

THE WARDEN. Well, well, Twentyman! His father's a West-country squire, and an old Eton man. I know all the family myself. You don't live cheaply yourself, you know, Twentyman—eh? Besides, we all know that you are waiting for Slapton Parva to fall in, and then we shall lose your valuable services as tutor, and Providence will transfer you to a wider sphere of usefulness. Eleven hundred a year—eh?—and a nice rectory and sixty acres of glebe.

MR. T. (*somewhat defiantly*). I fail to see, Mr. Warden, that the fact that I am senior clerical fellow, and so next in succession to Slapton Parva, has anything to do with Mr. Firebrace's misconduct.

THE WARDEN (*cheerfully*). Don't you? Well, you see, his uncle is lord of the manor, that's all. And his mother is a daughter of the Lord Lieutenant, and one of his brothers is a son-in-law of the Bishop. The Firebraces are an old county family. Come in, my dear Twentyman, and have some lunch. Lord Pimlico and Sir Hugh Carlyon are inside. Come in.

MR. T. (*to himself*). It is hopeless to attempt to maintain discipline in St. Margaret's. I wish to Heaven old Raven would die, as he ought to have done long ago, and Slapton fall in.

THE WARDEN (*to himself*). Vulgar fellow, Twenty-

man! Father was a cobbler at Slumborough. Always did think those close Slumborough fellowships a beastly nuisance. Wish some Commission would come and reform them away, and Twentyman with them. Must ask young Firebrace to dinner to-night. And I'll have Towser to meet him. Good company, Towser, though he is shamefully deaf.

So MR. FIREBRACE, *much to his astonishment, is asked to dinner at the* WARDEN'S *Lodge, where he meets* MR. TOWSER, *and becomes very good friends with that excellent old gentleman. And* MR. TWENTYMAN *sends next morning for an unlucky sizar, who has no friends, and who has missed chapel, and confines him to gates for a fortnight. And St. Margaret's goes on much as usual.*

BETWEEN THE LINES.

From Celandine, Court Milliner, 33 *Monde Street, W., to the Hon. Diana Church-Mouse,* 100 *Curzon Street, Mayfair.*

May 1, 1882.

MADEMOISELLE,—You did me the honour to-day, in the company of your sister, Madame la Comtesse de Fabricant d'Allumettes, to order a few dresses, which you were pleased to say would be amply sufficient for the present season. If Mademoiselle will deign to permit a person much experienced in such matters to address her (confidentially) on the subject, I would venture to observe:

(1stly) That the extraordinary beauty and dignity of Mademoiselle's appearance can only be properly set off by the most luxurious and elegant costumes.

(2ndly) That although Mademoiselle's respected father, Lord Blarney, would doubtless not object to her making a rich marriage, yet his Lordship might not care to pay a heavy sum for Mademoiselle's outfit.

(3rdly) That a rich marriage is, as a rule, chiefly

secured by those who have the means of presenting a rich appearance; and, as I have every confidence in Mademoiselle's power of attraction, I am prepared to supply her with every necessary of attire, including hosiery, boots, lace, jewellery, &c., on condition that Mademoiselle agrees to deal with me *alone*.

I should not expect a settlement of the account until six months after the marriage, which I can prophesy (with my assistance) Mademoiselle will make. Will Mademoiselle honour me with a personal reply to-morrow?

I trust that Mademoiselle will pardon the liberty I have taken in thus addressing her, and accept the assurance of my perfect devotion.

CELANDINE.

The Hon. Diana Church-Mouse to Celandine.

May 2, 1882.

Miss Church-Mouse has received Madame Celandine's letter, and in reply, agrees to the conditions proposed. Miss Church-Mouse is unable to call until to-morrow, as she is going with her father to Lord Draco's garden party at Chiswick, and is compelled to start early. Madame Celandine may expect Miss Church-Mouse to-morrow morning about 12 o'clock.

From the Earl of Draco, Spartan House, St. James's, to Celandine, 33 Monde Street, W.

May 1, 1883.

The Earl of Draco encloses his cheque for £2700 in payment of Lady Draco's account with Madame Celandine. He also gives Madame Celandine notice that, for the future, the account of Lady Draco with her must not exceed the sum of £1000 per annum.

From Celandine to the Countess of Draco (née *Diana Church-Mouse.*

May 1, 1884.

MADAME LA COMTESSE,—You say that you have no money to pay me the £3990 you have run up within the year, and yet you wear jewels that are almost priceless. If you do not arrange something satisfactory with me to-morrow, I shall call upon the Earl with your letter.

CELANDINE.

Telegram from Diana Jones to Celandine.

Impossible to do anything with jewels. Somebody would notice at once. Heirlooms. Suggest some other course.

May 1, 1884.

From Celandine to the Countess of Draco.

May 1, 1884.

MADAME LA COMTESSE,—Just received your telegram. If you will bring me the tiara and set of stars, I can manage the affair for you in a way which will satisfy me and save you from exposure.

I happen to know a gentleman who deals in jewellery, and he tells me that he can take out the large stones in the centre, and replace them with imitation, of the best quality, and lend you £4000 upon them. I feel sure that they will suit you.

I shall only charge you £200 commission, which, as you see, will only leave you £190 in my debt.

CELANDINE.

From Celandine to the Countess of Draco.

May 1, 1885.

MADAME LA COMTESSE,—If you don't pay me this afternoon, I shall call upon Milord with your letters. The gentleman (in the jewellery line) who lent you the money is pressing me most cruelly. At the same time I could even now help you out of the affair, if you would only listen to reason.

Mr. Jacob Brummagem, one of my customers, saw you here the other day, and is ready to pay off your

liabilities, as far as they concern me, for the honour of your acquaintance. Will you come to-morrow at 4 o'clock and eat some strawberries, and drink a glass of champagne?

CELANDINE.

From Jacob Brummagem, Esq., of the Gehenna Club, Regent Street, and Shoddy Hall, Sheffield, to Celandine.

May 1, 1885, 10.30 P.M.

DEAR CELANDINE,—Just received your note with enclosed telegram from Lady D. Shall be with you *punctually* at 4 to-morrow and will bring the necessary,

Yours faithfully,

JACOB BRUMMAGEM.

P.S.—You might bring the fizz up *open*, and put a dash of Cognac in it, eh? Twig?

Extract from daily papers of May 1, 1886. *Draco* v. *Draco, Brummagem, Salax, Tarquin, and Tomnoddy.*

"The decree *nisi* in this celebrated case was this morning made absolute."

ST. JAMES'S VISITS ST. GEORGE'S.

I.

Boudoir of the COUNTESS OF OAKLANDS. *Her Ladyship is discussing afternoon tea with the* DUCHESS OF STILTON.

LADY O. It is all right, my dear. I have found out everything from young Harry Tempest. We must wait till it is just dark, and then take the Whitechapel omnibus to a place he calls the Minories. You turn down the Minories—you see I've got it all written down—until you come to the Tower. Then when you see the Tower in front of you, you must take your left hand and keep on going down hill. Then you will come to a great, high, brick wall. That is the London Docks. Keep along with that wall on your right hand, and you're in Ratcliffe Highway. Harry has given me a list of the places to see.

DUCHESS. Tell me. I am all impatience.

LADY O. First of all, on the left hand, is the Prussian Eagle, where they have songs and dancing in a room upstairs. Then on the right hand is Old Gravel

Lane. There is a public house there called the Old King William, where a dreadful murder was committed ever so many years ago. De Quincey wrote all about it, you know; and Harry tells me that if we were to go straight on we should come to High Street, Wapping, where that dreadful Tichborne Claimant used to live. But he says it's a very dangerous part, and that we had better keep in the Highway. You must not call it Ratcliffe Highway down there, by the way, my dear, or they will be angry and insult you. It is St. George's High Street, or High Street, St. George's, I forget which. Then a little further on is a dancing saloon called the Mahogany Bar. That we are particularly not to miss. And after that is the White Swan. They call it Paddy's Goose. My dear, it is the Albert Hall of the place. Harry says that you will find sailors there of every nation—Swedes, Danes, Americans, Frenchmen, and Russians—and they all dance and chatter to one another in their own language. And he says that when we have seen that we had better take a cab—there is a cab rank just outside—and get away as soon as we can, for that the rest of the Highway is not safe. It will be too late, of course, to go to the shops where they sell the beasts and wild birds—Jamrach's—and the other places. Besides we can drive down any day and see those in the daytime without the least trouble.

DUCHESS. But I want to see the Opium Den, in "Edwin Drood," you know.

LADY O. Ah, my dear, that would be much too dangerous, except in the daytime. It is up a horrible court called Palmer's Folly, where Harry says we might get murdered in a moment, or even worse. But let us be off. The carriage is ready. I shall tell Osborne to put us down at Oxford Circus.

II.

The interior of a Whitechapel omnibus. Among the company SERGEANT JACKSON, *of the Grenadiers, quartered at the Tower,* MRS. O'FLANAGHAN, *of the Whitechapel Road, and others.*

CONDUCTOR (*pushing in the* DUCHESS *and* LADY O.). Room for two.

LADY O. (*anxiously*). Where?

MRS. O'FLANAGHAN. No room for such as them, I hope.

SERGEANT (*rising*). Take my seat, my dear. We are full up, and he knew it.

[*The* CONDUCTOR *rings his bell, and the omnibus starts. The ladies not expecting the jerk, lose their balance.* LADY OAKLANDS *clings to the knee of a stout gentleman.*

STOUT GENTLEMAN. You are pinching me. But never mind, madam. Take your time.

MRS. O'F. (*at the top of her voice*). I don't move from my seat for painted Molls like them.

(*Chorus of sympathetic matrons*). Not likely.

SERGEANT (*pointing to the* DUCHESS). The little lady can sit on your lap. (*The* DUCHESS *follows the suggestion*).

* * * * * * *

CONDUCTOR. Hi! Minories! Tower 'ill! All fares for the Minories.

LADY O. How much, please?

CONDUCTOR. Oh, stow your larks! You know as well as I do. Fourpence each.

LADY O. (*feeling in her pocket*). Good gracious! I have lost my purse.

CONDUCTOR. Now, then. Can't stop here all night. Fourpence each.

DUCHESS. My dear. It's terrible. I have left my purse at home.

CONDUCTOR. Oh, that tale be blowed! Here, I'll have a policeman in a moment.

LADY O. (*almost fainting*). Will you take this ring.

CONDUCTOR (*with supreme contempt*). Not likely! Come, pay up. Fourpence each, or I calls the police.

SERGEANT JACKSON (*slipping a shilling into the* DUCHESS'S *hand*). Pay him, my dear. I'd punch his head if I couldn't see you was ladies.

MRS. O'F. (*with supremely virtuous disdain*). Yah Couple of hussies!

MRS. O'F.'S NEIGHBOUR. My daughter ain't up to much; but if she was as bad as either of them jades, I'd turn her neck and crop out of the house!

[*The trio descend.*

LADY O. (*to* SERGEANT JACKSON). How can I thank you?

SERGEANT (*with greatest politeness*). Not at all, my dear. Can't bear to see a gal in distress. Can't I see you part of the way home? I wish I'd a comrade with me, with a stray shilling or two. I'm clean dried up. Can't even stand you a drink. Beside four 'd be company; three's none. Come as far as the Tower, and I'll pick up a dollar somewhere. Never like to see a pretty face in trouble. Cheer up, my beauties. Two such slap-up gals as you never ought to want for nothing.

DUCHESS. I beg your pardon, Sergeant, but I know your Colonel very well, and I couldn't go with you to the Tower. I don't mind telling you that I'm (*in a whisper*) the Duchess of Stilton. The Duke was in your regiment only three years ago, when he was Mr. Cheshire. But we wanted to see Ratcliffe Highway—out of fun, you know, Sergeant—and now we don't know what to do, or how to get back.

SERGEANT. God d—— (*suddenly checking himself*).

Bless my soul! Why, his Grace was in my battalion. Beg your Grace's most humble pardon. (*Brings his hand to the salute*). What can I do for your Grace?

THE DUCHESS. You have done more than we can ever thank you for sufficiently already, Sergeant; but even now my friend and I are in difficulties. We wanted, as I told you, to see Ratcliffe Highway, and now here we are quite helpless. Why, we might have been arrested if it had not been for you!

SERGEANT. Beg your Grace's pardon, but if the lady with you doesn't mind she could pawn that ring the conductor wouldn't take. There's a respectable shop just a few doors down.

DUCHESS and LADY O. Oh! thank you; that's capital.

LADY O. Will you take it and do it?

SERGEANT. No, lady; they'd be asking me all kinds of questions. Take it in yourself, and (*in a low tone*) give the man your ladiesmaid's name and the right address. He'll give you a sovereign on it at once, and I'll show your Grace and the other lady to any part of the Highway you want. It isn't a safe place for ladies to go to alone.

III.

The Saloon at "Paddy's Goose." That favourite East-end (now) dance, the Mazurka, is being performed with all the native vigour of St. George's. The SERGEANT *is standing by the two ladies, keeping watch over them with a stern sense of his responsibility. The ladies themselves are almost choked with bad tobacco smoke, the fumes of beer and spirits, the heat of the gas, and the peculiar aroma of damp sawdust.*

FIRST SAILOR (*approaching the* DUCHESS). Come along, Poll, let's toe it.

DUCHESS. Sir!

SERGEANT. Let the lady alone, Jack.

FIRST SAILOR (*to* DUCHESS). Don't "sir" me. I ain't a warrant officer. (*To* SERGEANT JACKSON). Ought to be ashamed of yourself, you selfish lubber—wanting two of 'em to yourself. Why don't you stand 'em a pot, and wet their gills?

SECOND SAILOR. All alike, them lobsters; always mean. (*Addressing* LADY O.). Come, my pretty, *you* like a sailor, I can tell by the look of you. Come and have a turn with me. Here, you (*to* POT-BOY), bring the lady a pint of stout.

LADY O. (*in a whisper*). My dear, it's horrible. Do let us go.

MISS MCCARTHY (*from Tiger Bay*). Yah! West-

end muck! Wonder they dare come amongst honest folk.

MISS DWYER (*in a tone of conviction*). The likes of them ought to be limbed—limbed! Look at 'em, dressed and painted up—robbing honest men. Look at the paint on 'em. Makes decent folk sick, it does.

[*Music ceases, and the Mazurka terminates with a stamp of extra energy. Band immediately strikes up the Caledonians.*

DUCHESS. We'll just see this, dear, and then we'll be going. I'm sure the Sergeant will see us into a cab. Merciful Heavens (*puts her handkerchief hurriedly to her face*)! There's Captain Graham, of the Grenadiers, with a friend. (*In a whisper.*) What are we to do? He'll be certain to tell Stilton, and I shall never hear the end of it.

LADY O. (*gravely and desperately*). I shall begin to cry in a moment, I know I shall.

CAPTAIN GRAHAM (*strolling up, having recognized the* DUCHESS *and* LADY O., *and dismissing the* SERGEANT *with a nod*). This is unexpected, Duchess. Whatever has brought you here; and you, too, Lady Oaklands.

LADY O. Oh! don't, Captain Graham. Don't—don't say anything. I'm frightened out of my life. Do take us away—please do at once.

DUCHESS. Yes, please take us away, Captain Graham, and thank the Sergeant here. He has been so kind

and attentive to us. That horrid conductor would have locked us up if he hadn't interfered.

CAPTAIN GRAHAM. Locked you up! Conductor!

DUCHESS. Yes, Captain Graham. Locked us up because we hadn't any money to pay him; the Sergeant here paid him himself, and then, as we were here, we thought we must see what the place was like, and so—(*hesitating*)—and so we had to pawn Lady Oaklands' ring, and the Sergeant said if we really wanted to see the place we had better let him come with us, as it wouldn't be safe to go alone, and we were just going to let him take us to a cab when we saw you. The fact is (*lowering her voice*) we've been "slumming;" but (*laughs*) we'll never do it again.

CAPTAIN GRAHAM. Allow me (*offers his arm to* DUCHESS). (*To* LADY OAKLANDS.) My friend, Mr. Fortescue, will take charge of you. Sergeant Jackson, do you think you can find a cab?

SERGEANT. Certainly, sir.

MISS DWYER. Yah! Told yer so. There they go—the two of 'em. Blowed if they ain't collared three blokes between them! (*With intense moral superiority.*) Disgustin', I call it—disgustin'. Get out, yer muck!

* * * * *

So ends an evening's Comedy of Errors. A week later, Sergeant Jackson becomes Sergeant-Major, for reasons best known to his Colonel, but which will always

remain a mystery to his brother non-commissioned officers; and at about the same time he receives a cheque, with which he opens a comfortable little banking account. It had always been his ambition to end his days as a licensed victualler, but it is now certain that his licensed house will be a hotel, doing a good business.

A MODERN ESAU.

THE Vanstones were country gentlemen long before the time of James the First. Their estate was in Kent, on the banks of the Whipple, and the mill on that river, the pool of which was famous for its trout, was said to be as old as the time of the Plantagenets, although not a fragment of the original structure was remaining when his blessed Majesty King William the Fourth ascended the throne.

The Vanstones had always been more or less eccentric, and it was a fact among them, as among many other old English families, that the father always cordially hated the sons, while the sons impartially divided between themselves such surplus of hate as they could spare after satisfying their consciences with regard to their father.

The Squire Vanstone of that time (all through the great Civil War) sided with the King, for doing which he lost his life and his estates. The latter, however, were restored to his son when Charles the Second came to the throne, and from that day to this the Vanstones have been squires of importance in Kent, and owners

of one of the largest estates in that "garden of England."

Now, the late Squire Vanstone, who died some twenty years ago or more, had two sons, Godfrey and Owen, and through some neglect, oversight, or it may be even family quarrel, the entail had been broken, so that Squire Vanstone was absolute owner in what lawyers term the fee simple of every acre of land entered upon his rent roll, comprising the house, the park with its outlying villages, a good deal of land let in farms to highly desirable tenants, and more especially—for the purposes of this story—the mill which artists would come down from London to sketch, and to fish in the waters of which was a privilege whose value was known to the miller, while he almost paid his rent by the judicious use of the knowledge.

Of the old Squire's two sons the elder went into the army, and while quartered at Canterbury mortally offended his father by marrying one of the daughters of a clergyman with a wretchedly small living, who was of no particular extraction, who had been a sizar at Cambridge, and had in no way whatever distinguished himself from the smallest Dissenting tub-thumper except by being the father of a most charming daughter —a distinction which tub-thumpers seldom achieve.

Old Vanstone was furious at the marriage. He sent his son a cheque for a hundred pounds, and told him

that the keeper at the lodge gates had orders to refuse him admission. He sent for his lawyer, and had a will made in which he solemnly disinherited Esau, and made over everything to Jacob; and Jacob, who was a good young man, and could consequently get at information by channels unknown to those of a worldly turn of mind, kept his own counsel, and, so far from stirring up his father's wrath, was always at hand to point out that errors of judgment are venial—that a man must leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife—that his elder brother, although impulsive, had yet behaved honourably, and so on, all of which, although doubtless well meant, only served to pour oil and sprinkle brimstone on the old gentleman's red-hot wrath.

So the elder brother sold out of the army, and found, when he had realized everything, that he had some £1500, or thereabouts, clear. Some nine-tenths of this sum he deposited with his wife's father, and, commending his wife to the charge of her parents, started, with a few ten-pound notes, for the United States. A week after he had left Liverpool the war between the Northern and the Southern States had broken out. He had gone to seek his fortune, and he put his sword at the service of General Grant. He rose rapidly, distinguished himself, and returned to England with a very considerable sum of money. And so ends the first chapter in his history.

* * * * *

Godfrey Vanstone landed at Liverpool, where his wife and the boy, who had been born shortly after his departure, met him. His father, as he knew, had died during his absence, and had left everything to his younger brother.

In want of a rest he proceeded with them to Clifton, where, for two or three weeks, he did actually nothing, except ride on the downs and saunter about the Bristol quays.

Now the Bristol quays are strangely rich in old book-shops, and Godfrey, strolling one day along what may be called the Quai D'Orsay of the famous western sea-port, came across a volume which interested him for the simple reason that upon the vellum outside it were stamped his family arms. He took it up, and found it to be an old county history of Kent, thickly interleaved and, as book collectors term it, "inlaid" with maps and plans. Many of these were of later date than the book itself. Many were earlier, and had been bound in. The book took his fancy and excited his curiosity.

"Where did this come from?" he asked from the snuffy and bearded Socius of the beetle-browed little shop.

"From Vanstone Hall, sir, Kent. Squire Vanstone has been selling off his old library and laying down new books, and a lot of the old ones found their way here. That large map, sir, in the middle is a map of

the Vanstone estate itself. There is a lot of interleaving of that kind, and it makes the book interesting to gentlemen who know Kent, not to say valuable to collectors." This last with a cough of apology and expectation.

"I will give you," said Godfrey, looking through it again carelessly, "thirty shillings for it."

"Two pounds, sir," said the bookseller firmly. "The binding alone is in valuable preservation, and well worth the money I am asking as a specimen."

Ultimately Godfrey became the purchaser of the volume for thirty-five shillings. He took it back to his hotel, locked it carefully up, enjoyed his evening as usual with a game of billiards and a cigar, and early next morning sallied out and bought himself a watchmaker's lens. He then sent his wife and boy out for a drive, and began to examine the book and its maps and other interleaved matter very curiously. This took him some hours. The next day he went down again on to the Bristol quays, made inquiries, and retained the services of an old gentleman skilled in binding and black letter and press marks and colophons, and set him to work upon the book.

This worthy, after some hours' labour, a pint of sherry, and a plate of sandwiches, had a report to make. The whole thing, he said, was very curious and very interesting. No doubt there was a mark, or had been

a mark, in the shape of a cross upon the island in the mill pool. Certainly there was a number against that cross. Clearly, the number was 372. On page 372 was an account of the little island, calling particular attention to an enormous poplar, and this account had been underlined. Of that there could be no doubt. There were faint traces of writing at the foot of the page. From the character, the writing itself was about the time of the Commonwealth. It was in Latin, and it ran thus :—"Subter populum versus boream sex pedes mea omnia item quæ ad Car. Humphrey, Mich. Pendelton, et Godf. Davenport pertinent. Quatuor pedes subter terram. Hugo Vanstone."

The old gentleman could spell out the Latin, but he could not understand it. He finished his sherry and sandwiches, expressed prolix thanks for a couple of guineas, and went his way rejoicing.

Godfrey Vanstone (Colonel U.S.A.) then transacted a little legal business. He managed—never mind how, the details are tedious—to obtain for himself, under an assumed name, a year's tenancy of the little island, with a proviso for a year's renewal, representing that he wanted it for bottom-fishing, and that full right of fishing from the shore was absolutely necessary. Then he left his wife and son in London and went down to the island himself, taking with him an old negro who had been his valet during part of the war, and who was

as faithful as a Newfoundland and as reticent as an owl.

Would he be recognized? This he asked himself as he looked in the glass. Not unless he went about too much. He was as bronzed as a gipsy. He had grown an immense beard, and his hair fell down upon his collar. No, he would pass. So down they went, and on the island they pitched a little tent, he and Sambo, and began to fish.

But where was the poplar? He had never known or even heard of a poplar on the island. He recollected, however, the old saying, "As tall as the tree, so deep the roots." And at last he fixed on the place where the poplar ought to have been, according to the best of his judgment and belief. It was a spot rich in toadstools. That of itself meant decaying vegetable matter. Are not truffles found under the shelter of oaks?

Over this spot he pitched himself a second tent, under cover of which he and Mr. Sambo commenced digging. Sambo was cheerful and serenely indifferent. As well a digging job for Sambo as any other job. So they dug away until at about a depth of four feet Sambo struck his shovel against a big stone, jarred his elbow, and, forgetting his reserve, cursed in his native African by all his African Gods.

The digging was stopped for the day. On the morrow it was resumed. They uncovered a flat stone

about five feet by three. This they prized up with a crowbar. Under it lay what the disinherited son had been seeking. There in a confused heap was the family plate, mixed with the locks and bolts and handles of the long since decayed chest in which it had been buried. In what had once been the iron casing of a small box not two feet long by one and a half wide were the jewels. And to show that they had found everything and need search no farther, with the jewels was a "hatful," as the rustics term it, of gold and silver, which had been too heavy to carry away in its bulk. The discovery of the coins and their date clinched the matter. No more need to dig another square yard in the little island.

* * * * * * *

The treasure was cleverly taken away one foggy morning before sunrise in a tiny teakettle of a steam launch hired *ad hoc*, and on the third day it was safe in a room on the first floor in Jermyn Street. When matters came to be reckoned up, Godfrey Vanstone found himself with a trifle over thirty-seven thousand pounds and still in the prime of life.

He has a villa now at Cannes overlooking the glorious blue of the Mediterranean, where he lives happily with his wife for six months in the year. The summer is spent at Cowes or where else they please, for his 60-ton schooner will take him anywhere.

The boy is at Rugby. Mr. Sambo does nothing. His curly locks are as white as snow and his nickname is "Massa Snowball."

The whole truth of the story was never known. Godfrey and Mr. Sambo preserved a judicious silence. Vague guesses were made, but they never got beyond guesswork.

Only two incidents to finish. Owen Vanstone was struck down in the lobby of the House of Commons with paralysis. He may live for years, but he will never again set foot to the ground. When he dies childless, the Vanstone estates will revert to Godfrey or to his heirs. But the brothers have not met, and will never meet again on this side, at any rate, of the grave.

The second incident is the fate of the old county history. It is preserved in a casket specially made for it in the Rue de la Paix. When he is asked why so costly a box was ordered for so worthless an old book, Godfrey only laughs. "The volume," he says, when his laugh is over, "has family associations. It is the only family relic I have which I at all value."

LE DESSOUS DES CARTES.

From Eické Meauseys, Esq., of 160 *Grosvenor Square; Monplaisir, Cowes, Isle of Wight; and Pendragon Castle, Cornwall; to Captain the Hon. Vivian Roper, Lucullus Club, Piccadilly.*

160 GROSVENOR SQUARE, W.

MY DEAR ROPER,—I feel sure that you will be glad to see by the above address that your old friend Jos is once more within hail of the Lucullus. It was hard to tear oneself away from the dear old Castle—"Far from the madding crowd," you know, and all that, eh?—but, as my wife says, one owes a duty to society: what do *you* think? Besides, her Grace the Duchess of Pendragon (valued friend of mine, the Duke) insists upon presenting her at the next Drawing-room; and, unless we are to have another season as dull as ditch-water, people in our position must come to the fore.

I cannot disguise from myself the fact that when Mrs. Meauseys sweeps into a drawing-room with me on her arm (I mean, leaning upon my arm), attired in

the crimson velvet that so well becomes her dark style of beauty, and showing off the Meauseys diamonds to their utmost advantage, she never fails to create a sensation. There is a stillness in the room, broken only by murmurs of universal admiration, that reminds me of the days of my youth, and the regalia-room at the Tower on a popular holiday. Talking of the Tower reminds me naturally of Pendragon Castle. You are, I believe, a connection of the Duke, and so probably knew it when the poor fellow was still able to keep open house. *You ought to see it now!* Since it came into my possession I have had it done up from top to bottom—such an improvement! There was something in becoming lord of the Pendragon estates, a something in the fortunate discovery of the long-lost Meauseys arms, crest, and motto (of course we have now resumed the original orthography of the grand old name—please note this with regard to future correspondence); there was a something in all this, I say, which enabled me to give up the fascinating atmosphere of the money market without a pang.

Talking of finance, my dear Roper, reminds me that I came across a bit of blue paper of yours, which had somehow found its way into my desk. An acceptance for two-fifty, you see, rather overdue. I have much pleasure in enclosing it, and begging you to take your own time about the trifling affair. Between men of

honour, don't you know? *Noblesse oblige*, as our motto puts it. Say no more about it.

I was glad to see you in the Park the other day with the Earl of Wessex, a member of the committee of your club, by the way. Why not bring him down again to-morrow? I could pick you up opposite the Achilles, and give you a trot round in the drag. And I dare say Mrs. M. will have a chop or something ready for us later on.

Yours always,

EICKÉ MEAUSEYS.

P.S.—Mind you bring Wessex.

From Captain the Hon. Vivian Roper to Eické Meauseys, Esq.

LUCULLUS CLUB, PICCADILLY, W.

DEAR IKE,—That's about right for spelling, isn't it? Thanks for your letter and enclosure. As to the giddy "kite," since you insist upon it, I won't say another word about it. On my honour, I won't. Rely upon that. I am sorry, however, that neither I nor Lord Wessex will be able to join you in the Park this afternoon, as we are both commanded to attend the garden-party at Marlborough House. Lord Wessex dines with his mother to-night; but I shall be happy to join you in the succulent chop towards nine.

Faithfully yours,

VIVIAN ROPER.

From Eické Meauseys, Esq., to Viscount Shillclagh, Lucullus Club.

GEHENNA CLUB, REGENT STREET, W.

MY LORD,—I happened to be waiting to-day in the hall of the Lucullus for my old friend his Grace the Duke of Pendragon, who had invited me to lunch, when you came in, and, going up to the list of candidates for election, indulged in a somewhat critical series of observations thereupon. Amongst other caustic remarks, I was slightly surprised to hear the following: "Moses? Why, verb imperative the past-participled impertinence of the past-participled blood-sucker! I'm past-participled if I don't speak to every member of the club about it!"

As, upon referring to the list in question, I find that *my* name is the only one upon it which has the slightest resemblance to that of "Moses," I hereby require you to retract the whole of the first sentence I overheard, and to fulfil the threat contained in the second sentence—in *favour* of my candidature.

You are no doubt aware that your promissory note for £7000 odd fell due last week, and that, although I have ceased to amuse myself with dabbling in finance, I may still have something to say as to the renewal of this particular note. If you chose, you might even now make a friend of

EICKÉ MEAUSEYS.

From Eické Meauseys, Esq., to Messrs. Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego, Solicitors, of 177 *Old Jewry, E.C.*

160 Grosvenor Square, W.

Proceed at once against Lord Shillelagh with the utmost rigour of the law. Is "Go to the devil and do your worst!" actionable? Serve him this afternoon if possible, and mind, as publicly as possible.

E. M.

From Messrs. Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego, to Eické Meauseys, Esq.

177 Old Jewry, E.C.

Yourself *v.* The Viscount Shillelagh.

Dear Sir,—Your honoured favour to hand. In accordance with your valued instructions, we hurried on preliminaries, and our Mr. Abednego presented himself this morning at his lordship's chambers, St. James's Street. As his lordship was giving a large breakfast, tho valet refused our junior partner admittance, until the diplomatic administration of a sovereign brought him to his senses.

Our Mr. Abednego, therefore, was enabled, in accordance with your valued instructions, to serve the writ "as publicly as possible." We have, however, to regret that his lordship thought fit to kick our Mr. Abednego

down his lordship's (extremely steep) stairs. A summons for assault will, of course, be immediately served upon his lordship. We also rejoice to say that we have just received £7335 6*s.* 8*d.* from his lordship's solicitors, in full payment of your claim against him.

We are, dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

SHADRACH, MESHACH, & ABEDNEGO.

P.S.—We understand that Lord Shillelagh is engaged to be married to Miss Blobbs, the American heiress.

From Eické Meauseys, Esq., to Sir Charles Punter, Bart., of Baccarat Hall, Leicestershire, and the Lucullus Club, Piccadilly, W.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.]

160 GROSVENOR SQUARE, W.

Mr. Eické Meauseys presents his compliments to Sir Charles Punter, and ventures to hope that the fact that he will probably soon be able to meet Sir Charles as a brother member of the Lucullus will excuse his addressing him (under the circumstances) without a formal introduction. Bad news proverbially travels fast, and Mr. Meauseys has heard, like the rest of the world, of Sir Charles's heavy losses last Wednesday night. But, unlike the rest of the world, Mr. M. has a heart full of sympathy and a purse full of—well, enough to enable Sir Charles to retain his seat on the committee of the

Lucullus. Mr. Meauseys therefore begs to enclose a blank cheque, which he is hereby happy to authorize Sir Charles Punter to fill up for the full amount of his temporary necessities.

P.S.—"A friend in need is a friend indeed." How glad I should be if—— But fill up the cheque, dear Sir Charles. E. M.

From the Manager of the London and Pendragon Bank, Cornhill, to Eické Meauseys, Esq.

DEAR SIR,—I think it only right to inform you that Sir Charles Punter has presented your cheque for £10,000, and has duly received that amount. I merely mention this as the writing (with the exception of your signature) was unknown to us.

I am, dear Sir, your obedient Servant,

JOHN CAUTEOUS,
Manager.

Extract from Letter of Arthur Nemo, Esq., the Albany to Captain Quidam, 100th Dragoon Guards, the Curragh.

And now for two bits of news. Charley Punter has paid up! And Ikey Moses, the money-lender of Crœsus Chambers, the ruin of Lackland, Pendragon, and a host of others, has been *elected* by the Lucullus! Shillelagh, who blackballed him, is furious.

THE SCHOONER AND THE LAUNCH.

I WAS living at Erith, one of the most delightful little places between London and the Noré for those who really love peace and quiet. A stockbroker, wise in his generation, had just built himself a summer bungalow there on the edge of the chalk cliff, with a long strip of garden in which he took marvellous pride. I was always going up and down the river; sometimes in a little open boat of my own, with a huge lateen sail, sometimes on a tug, sometimes in a sailing-barge—for I made it my business to know skippers of every kind, and to be a welcome guest on their craft.

But there was one man whom I could never get near. He kept entirely to himself. His equals disliked him, and called him the "king of the bargemen," by way of mockery. He was a man of substance, for he owned one great billy-boy which he sailed himself, and in which he would fetch stone from Portland, or other such heavy cargoes, and, occasionally, if he wanted a long run, potatoes from Cornwall or the Islands. I used to meet him here and there upon the river, and I

could see that I was talking to a man who was, and always had been, a gentleman. But he did not care for conversation, and skilfully avoided the least approach to anything like intimacy. It was only later that I heard his story, and understood why he had thus become a floating hermit. I cannot, of course, say how far the tale is correct in detail, but I know that its broader lines are true.

In his younger days he had been an artist—a long-shore artist, painting beach and river sketches, and with a pretty little yacht of his own, in which he used to potter about the coast in quest of subjects. He could paint with feeling; and with his own private fortune, and his two, or perhaps three, small pictures in each year's Academy, was comfortably off. I may add that he was married, and loved his wife. Fortunately for both, there were no children.

It was the old story. His wife was young, pretty, and weak. She liked dresses which he could not afford, and hungered bitterly for jewellery almost beyond the reach of a painter. She wearied of her quiet life and its simple pleasures—her garden, and flowers, and hot-house, and her tranquil summers in the Channel Islands or on the French coast. The end of course came. She ran away with a rich man, the son of a Liverpool cotton-broker, a mere brute with a thin veneer of education and culture upon him, and who had all that

"insolence of wealth" which the Greek dramatists regarded as the bitterest, upon a man, of possible divine curses. Her husband did not go to the Divorce Court. He went on painting as usual; and whatever he may have suffered, he turned out as good work as ever—some people even said better.

One night, in the middle of a driving snowstorm, she came back to a small cottage he had taken at Deal, and tapped at the window. She was alone, helpless, and evidently dying. Her cough, and the flush on her cheek, told their own story. He forgave her, and she died in his arms. Then he left Deal, and for a year or two disappeared. When he was next seen, he had a small quick steam-launch, built almost on the lines of a torpedo-boat, in which he used to run about the coast between the North Foreland and the Scilly Islands. She was a strange craft, with marvellous speed, and when she dipped her funnel and burned smokeless coal, was hardly visible at any distance, except in the very clearest weather.

He kept entirely to himself; and some people said that his trouble had more or less unhinged his mind; others that he had turned his attention to marine engineering, and meant to make a fortune out of it; others that he had always been an odd kind of fellow, who might do anything.

His engineer and fireman were Sunderland men.

His cook and valet was a Maltese, of whom nobody knew anything, except that he seemed much attached to his master, and to have a natural hatred towards the rest of mankind. The fourth hand was a boy, who, when not engaged in dirty work, was always asleep.

The Erith Yacht Club had at that time, and, for all I know, still keeps up, not only its rooms on shore, but also a floating-house moored close to the pier, from which it is entered by a gangway. It is, or once was, a topsail schooner, built for some rich man as a cruising yacht in which to visit the South Sea Islands and the China Seas, and, in a peaceable kind of way, emulate the adventures of Rajah Brooke in the *Royalist*. The masts have now been taken out, and the interior of the vessel fitted as a large saloon, with one or two bunks forward, behind a bulkhead, for members who may suddenly find themselves in want of a bed, and beyond these again, a steward's room. The coffee-room, if I may so term the saloon, is a most pleasant resort on the morning of a hot summer Sunday; and I was seated here one day, placidly enjoying a cheroot and a brandy-and-soda, with a good allowance of ice, when I again heard somebody among those who were present use the words "the king of the bargemen." I dropped my paper and listened at once.

"It was a funny story," said one of the dozen or so

of men who occupied the divans and armchairs, "his running down that yacht."

"Not at all funny, if you knew all about it," said a second.

"I don't believe anybody does know all about it, or ever will," sententiously remarked a third.

Then there was a silence.

"How was it?" asked another member, pouring himself out some claret.

"It happened upon this wise," replied the member who had been the second to speak. "I think that I can cut the story short. His wife, you see—there always *is* a woman in affairs of this kind—was very pretty and very extravagant, and had many more whims than he could ever have gratified, if he had made four times the money he did; and he must have made a pretty good income, too. Do you remember that odd poem of Browning's about the beautiful girl of Pornic who was buried in her golden hair?"

The members of the Erith Yacht Club are not, as a rule, readers of the author of "Sordello." None of those present had even so much as heard of the poem in question.

"Well," continued the speaker, with that peculiar sense of enjoyment which is the reward of imparting knowledge, and is in many respects akin to pride, "his wife, you know, bolted with another fellow—a fellow

with a pot of money, who took her away with him in his yacht. I remember seeing the yacht at Cowes. A fine craft she was. When he found she had gone, and with whom, he moped for a long time down somewhere on the south coast. People say she came back to him and he forgave her. That I should very much doubt; he wasn't that kind of man. Anyhow, she died—there's no doubt about that—and after her death he gave up painting altogether. It was rather a pity, I thought at the time, and I think so still, for very few men could touch him in his own line. Well, he had a sort of blockade-runner built for him by the Thorneycrofts. She was a venomous-looking thing, but could go any number of knots an hour, and he used to knock about the coast in her."

"I'd sooner have a decent yawl about four times the size," observed a stout member from behind a cloud of smoke in the corner of the saloon. "About a sixth the original expense, much less than a sixth the annual cost, and twenty times the comfort."

"So a lot of fellows said at the time," continued the narrator. "Anyhow he got this launch; and it is a most curious thing that, one foggy night, she happened to run into a schooner yacht and cut her down to the water's edge. Nobody knows the rights or wrongs of the collision. The launch was hardly damaged at all, but the schooner was cut down almost to her keel; for

the launch had a bow like a ram, and went through the schooner's planks like a knife through a piece of note-paper. The launch stood by and picked up the schooner's crew. Oddly enough, they were all saved except the owner. He did not go down with the schooner, which was raised the next week, but his body was picked up a fortnight afterwards. The crabs and congers had been so busy with it that it would never have been identified but for the clothes and the letters in the pockets. There was an inquest, of course, but nothing came of it. I think it was what you call an open verdict. At all events, no more was heard of the matter; and I suppose the exact nautical rights and wrongs of the whole thing will, as I have said, never be settled. The only men on the deck of the launch at the moment of the collision were the owner himself, who was at the wheel, and a sort of valet he had, a fellow from the Mediterranean, who seems to have been so terrified that he entirely lost his head, and could give no account whatever of how the thing happened. Anyhow, the crew of the schooner were agreed that the launch was not to blame; and I heard at the time that they were very handsomely treated afterwards by its owner, although really there was not the least obligation on him to do anything of the kind."

"It seems odd that only the owner should have gone

down," observed the member from the corner of the room, "and nobody else."

"So it does," dryly answered the narrator. "Odd things *do* happen in this world. It came out at the inquest, when he was picked up, that his skull was smashed and all his fingers broken, as if they had somehow been jammed, I won't say hammered, but anyhow pinched and splintered into matchwood. But a collision at sea, after all, is just like a collision on a railway. There may be half-a-dozen fellows in the same carriage. One has both his thighs broken, and dies then and there of the shock; another has his knee-pan put out; and the other four escape with what they call in the papers 'no further injury than a severe shaking.'"

"Who was the owner of the schooner?" asked a young member who had not spoken before.

"As bad an egg as ever lived," was the answer. "Son of some Manchester cotton-spinner or Liverpool stock-broker. Was kicked out of his regiment for something shady, and kicked out of his club, the Rag, because he couldn't explain why his Colonel was in the wrong and he in the right. Was blackballed at every other club afterwards. He was considered shady even on the Turf. One of his exploits was to run away with another fellow's wife—I can't remember whose. She was little better than a child, and as soon as he was

tired of her he kicked her out into the streets, and I believe the poor thing was frozen to death in the snow. At all events she died of his ill-treatment—there's very little doubt of that. He was always a cur, and drowning was too good a death for him."

WHAT WE ARE COMING TO.

SCENE: *A Court of Justice. On the Bench,* MR. JUSTICE MUDDLESIDES *of the Queen's Bench Division. In the box, a patient but evidently exasperated Jury. The body of the Court is blocked with junior barristers, averaging about three-and-twenty years of age. The well of the Court is blocked with witnesses on the subpœna and otherwise. The gallery is packed with spectators like sardines in a box. On the Bench is the usual allowance of Countesses and other ornaments of Society.*

ASSOCIATE (*calling on case*). Silvertongue *v.* Jawkins.

MRS. SILVERTONGUE, *plaintiff in person* (*rising*). I call the Archbishop of Canterbury upon his subpœna. Before he is sworn, I wish to say——

MRS. JAWKINS, *defendant in person* (*rising*). And I wish most emphatically to point out——

MRS. S. You sit down. This place is not a bear-garden. I intend to conduct my case in my own way.

MRS. J. My lord, before the Archbishop is called, I wish to take a preliminary objection.

MRS. S. You can't. I defy you to do it.

MR. JUSTICE M. Really, ladies, if you conduct your own cases, you must follow the same rules as are imposed upon counsel. There can be no possible objection to a witness unless he is incompetent to take the oath.

MRS. J. I shall argue that point presently. Before the Archbishop is called, I wish to read some letters which I have here. (*Produces a book about the size of a half-year's volume of the "Times."*)

MR. JUSTICE M. What have these letters to do with the Archbishop's evidence?

MRS. S. Nothing whatever, and she knows it.

MRS. J. The Jury will see when I have read them.

MR. Justice M. (*wearily*). What is the date of these letters? We have already had twenty-seven days occupied with the reading of letters which have had no bearing on the case, and which have been between persons wholly unconnected with it.

MRS. J. They are a correspondence, my lord, which appeared between the years 1864 and 1872 in the *Hogborough Independent*, together with a series of twenty-seven leading articles in that journal, signed "Brutus."

MRS. S. "Brutus" is your own brother-in-law, and you know it.

MRS. J. He isn't.

MRS. S. You know he is. You're a wicked woman!

MR. JUSTICE M. The libel of which the plaintiff complains was written and published in the early part of 1884. I fail to see how the files of a paper twenty years ago can have anything to do with the case.

FOREMAN OF THE JURY. My lord, we have already had a correspondence which passed between the plaintiff and the defendant in the year 1835.

MRS. S. (*jumping up*). That's a wicked falsehood! I wasn't born in 1835. I'm not forty; and I've only been eight times to the House of Lords.

MR. JUSTICE M. I will refer to my notes.

MRS. J. I shall not submit to your lordship's notes. Your lordship has been prejudiced against me from the first. The next case I have I shall subpœna your lordship, and ask you on oath if it isn't so (*laughter in the back benches*). Those schoolboys behind me may laugh as much as they please. I know more law than all of them put together. The Court of Appeal always listens to me, and the Master of the Rolls has complimented me five times.

MR. JUSTICE M. I shall rule that letters and articles which appeared in a local paper twelve years before this action was brought are not admissible unless there is evidence to connect them with the plaintiff.

MRS. J. You will take a note that I object to your ruling.

MR. JUSTICE M. Certainly. Now, Mrs. Silvertongue, his Grace has been waiting in Court on his subpœna for a fortnight. What is he going to prove?

MRS. S. That he considers my poetry to have a moral and religious tendency, and that the criticisms of the defendant in her pamphlet, "A Shepperton Sappho," are malicious and libellous.

MR. JUSTICE M. But that is matter for the Jury, Mrs. Silvertongue. You can't call his Grace to speak to his opinion of your poetry. That is the very question the Jury have to decide.

MRS. J. Of course you can't. Besides, the Jury have had all your poetry read to them twice, and know all about it.

FOREMAN OF THE JURY. Too true (*groans deeply*).

MRS. S. I call the Archbishop of Canterbury.

MR. JUSTICE M. If he is only going to prove what you have said, I rule that you cannot call him.

MRS. S. I daresay he'll prove a good deal more (*laughter*). You never know what you can get out of an Archbishop until you try (*roars of laughter, amidst which the* ARCHBISHOP *is sworn*).

MRS. S. Your Grace has read my poems?

ARCHBISHOP. No, madam; never (*laughter*).

MRS. S. Then you ought to have read them. I sent them all to you by parcel post, the day my private secretary served you with your subpœna in the lobby

of the House of Lords. Now, on your oath, have you not heard my poems greatly praised?

ARCHBISHOP. I have never even heard them mentioned.

MRS. S. (*to the Jury*). That's always the way, gentlemen; they are all in the conspiracy against me. (*Turns sharply to his Grace*) You may go down.

MRS. J. Wait a minute. Do you consider the phrase, "A Shepperton Sappho," libellous?

ARCHBISHOP. I could not say without the context.

MRS. J. Then I will read the context to you.

FOREMAN OF THE JURY. My lord, if the context is the defendant's pamphlet, we have already had it read five times, my lord.

MR. JUSTICE M. Certainly. The Court must really draw the line somewhere. I shall not allow the pamphlet to be read again.

MRS. J. May I give the Archbishop a copy of the pamphlet, and have him called again when he has read it?

MRS. S. And may I give him another copy of my poems?

MR. JUSTICE M. I cannot compel his Grace to read the productions in question, or even to accept copies of them.

MRS. S. Then I shall move the Divisional Court for a mandamus to compel you to do so. My peace of

mind has been ruined by this vile conspiracy. The defendant there, and her brother-in-law, who is "Brutus" of the *Hogborough Independent*, have broken up my home and assailed my reputation. But I will have justice yet; if I carry this case to the House of Lords!

MR. JUSTICE M. Who is your next witness, Mrs. Silvertongue?

MRS. S. The Regius Professor of Poetry at Oxford.

MRS. J. What does *he* know about poetry? (*laughter*).

MRS. S. More than you do (*renewed laughter*).

MR. JUSTICE M. How long will his evidence take?

MRS. S. I can't possibly say. Perhaps four days. I want him to give his opinion of my poetry and of the libel.

MR. JUSTICE M. It is now eight o'clock, and the Court has sat for ten hours. I shall adjourn until to-morrow. How many more witnesses have you to call, Mrs. Silvertongue?

MRS. S. As far as I know, not more than one hundred and fifty. I have subpœnaed the President of the United States, the Emperor of China, and the King of Fiji. They have declined to attend, on the ground that they are out of the jurisdiction. I must conduct my case in my own way, and if they do not attend before I have finished, I must have an adjournment, that I may proceed against them by mandamus.

[*A consultation takes place between the Jury, during the course of which the plaintiff and defendant tie up their papers and strap up their books, and snort defiance severally at each other, and jointly at the learned Judge.*]

FOREMAN OF THE JURY. My lord, the Jury wish to submit to you that this case has already lasted seven weeks, and the defence has not yet been commenced. They do not wish to hear the defence at all. They are perfectly satisfied that the plaintiff has no case.

MRS. J. Of course not.

MRS. S. (*vehemently*). How dare you say I have no case, when you have not heard the whole of my evidence? You have hardly heard a quarter of it. Am I to be denied justice because I am a woman? I will go on with my case if I stop here for years.

FOREMAN OF THE JURY (*wearily*). Have we no power to stop the case, my lord?

MR. JUSTICE M. I am afraid not, gentlemen. I am sure I wish I could help you.

ASSOCIATE. The Court is adjourned till ten o'clock to-morrow.

[*The Jury depart wearily.* MRS. SILVERTONGUE *and* MRS. JAWKINS *are loudly cheered as they issue from the Court, and are escorted along the street*

by an admiring and sympathetic crowd. The FOREMAN OF THE JURY *loiters in a dazed condition on the steps of the Court.*]

FOREMAN OF THE JURY. I'm getting on for seventy, and I've served on juries for nearly fifty years. It wasn't so bad when we had Counsel. They knew how to do their work, and they put the thing before you. But ever since the new Act of Parliament, that if you want to employ Counsel you must pay for them yourself, whether you win or lose, and pay £20 into Court for leave to do so, things have been going from bad to worse. How it's to end I don't know.

AM I A FAILURE?

A DISCUSSION ON A QUESTION RECENTLY PROPOUNDED.

SCENE: *A private room in the Dagmar Hotel. Time,* 10.15 P.M. *Dramatis personæ* (*all smoking and drinking according to taste*): JAMES JOHNSON, *Barrister-at-Law,* LIEUTENANT-COLONEL THOMAS JOHNSON, *and the* REV. WILLIAM JOHNSON, *Rector of Fendy-cum-Shingle, Cambridgeshire.*

COLONEL JOHNSON. I don't think I am a failure in life: I've never had a chance. What on earth is a man to do in a double-battalion regiment? And yet I suppose I am a failure, too. First at Sandhurst, then at Chatham, then Aldershot, then all over the shop. I shall be put on the compulsory list before long, and drop off on my half-pay. Of course I am a failure in life. Any man is a failure in life who can't marry, and bring up his family, and keep a dog-cart, and a pony carriage for his wife. I can't afford to keep a wife, let alone the pony carriage. That is what comes of serving one's country. I wish to Heaven, when we were out in India, I'd been quartermaster; I should

have saved money, and as soon as we came back I'd have sold out, and set up an hotel.

MR. JAMES JOHNSON. Let us confine ourselves to the record. I myself am a dismal failure. I had every prospect at the Bar; but my prospects have all vanished away into prospects, and remained such. Now, suppose we go through the questions. I will put them to myself. "Do I attribute my failure in life to drink?" Certainly not. I never drink more than a gentleman ought. "To gambling?" I never had as much as ten shillings on any event in my life, from the Derby down to a rubber of whist. Then he asks me "if I am dishonest." I wish I had him in the witness-box. Then he wants to know "if I have unfortunate acquaintances." Does he mean unfortunate for them, or unfortunate for me, or unfortunate for both? Clearly the fellow is boxing the compass. Look at his next piece of impertinence. "Is my failure due to marriage, or is it due to single life?" Now, I wonder if he has ever read his rejected addresses. First he calls you the scum of the people, and then he calls you the dregs of the people. Take a basin of good, honest patriotic beef or mutton soup, and you will find the scum at the top and the dregs at the bottom. How, then, can you be both at once? Then he wants to know "if I am disinclined to work;" and then, "if I ever lend or borrow." Never did either, and for the best of reasons. Then, he

wants my views on politics, religion, and tobacco. A pretty good jumble that. Why didn't he ask my views on the quadration of the circle, the millennium, and the Tichborne Claimant? And look at this: "Do I attribute my failure to general incapacity?" And then the last question of all. If I don't attribute it to any of the causes he has named, "do I attribute it to any other cause?" If I took these things up before a Master as interrogatories, I should have the whole lot struck out in chambers as superfluous and "scandalous."

REV. WILLIAM JOHNSON. I, too, am a failure in life. But my failure can be easily accounted for. (*Yell of laughter from his two brothers.*) Yes, I repeat it—easily accounted for. Early in life, before my faculties were fully matured, the choice of a profession was thrust upon me. I chose the Church, and my abilities have been correspondingly cramped. What I want is a large field. Spurgeon and Haweis and men of that sort I regard as impostors. The times were never more ripe for a Loyola or a Savonarola. But if I dared to show what I feel is in me I should have the rural dean down upon me in a minute. After him I should have the bishop. The jealousy that exists in the Church is something altogether too contemptible.

MR. JAMES JOHNSON. Jealousy! Jealousy is only family interest and family feeling, or personal interest and personal feeling, turned inside out like the thumb

of a glove. No honest man is jealous of another. "But what is the first word of your rogue? "I'm as good a man as he. Why shouldn't I have his place?" And then your rogue actually goes on to argue himself into the belief that you have robbed him of the place in question, and ought to be punished for doing so. If you only knew how men will truckle and cringe and eat dirt for any kind of preferment! We once had a very pious Chancellor. Bless him! He taught in a Sunday-school. But he was a great man and an honest one. Men who ought to be ashamed of themselves for doing so used to go and teach in his Sunday-school, and say they did it for the love of the thing. And then he used to make them county court judges, or shove them into some other office that they might eat a morsel of bread.

REV. WILLIAM JOHNSON. I know the Lord Chancellor to whom you refer. He was very Low Church; in fact, almost Calvinistic. So I can forgive him anything. If, he said to himself, I prefer Jones over Smith, it is but because I am a humble instrument in the hands of Providence. But admitting that he sinned, he sinned according to the best of his lights. He really believed himself a servant of the true faith. Now, the Lord Bishop of Putney was an offender of quite a different sort. He did the trick openly.

MR. JAMES JOHNSON. As how? I never heard of the

old fellow, for my part. He kept pretty clear of the ecclesiastical courts, in which I have a fair practice, being, with all submission to the precious efficacy of your laying-on of hands, a much better theologian than yourself.

REV. WILLIAM JOHNSON. Revile, dear brother, if you please. I shall not revile again. The Bishop of Putney, whose Palace is not many miles from that of Mr. Robert Twignall, of whom you perhaps may have heard, was blessed, like Job, with a large family. He had thirteen daughters, ranging from Jemima and Kezia down to Keren-happuch, and of varying shades and hues of ugliness. Had he been a curate in the country the girls must have starved or lived on cabbages, or gone out as governesses. But the Bishop of Putney has 150 livings in his gift; so he married the whole batch, and I am told that they make very excellent wives, and are models of domestic economy.

COLONEL JOHNSON. Thank Providence I put on the stiff choker, and not the white one. A pretty thing if you had to get on at the Horse Guards by marrying the adjutant-general's or quartermaster-general's "elderly, ugly daughter." No, lads, I shall hold on till they retire me, shall leave with the rank of general, and look out for a nice widow. Lots of them about, I am told. I haven't been president of the mess in my younger days for nothing. I can keep the household

accounts to a penny. And whatever I do, you won't find me at one of those infernal seaside places, half shingle and half mud, and with a floating population of bill-discounters, garrison-hacks, shopkeepers, and volunteer officers. I shall go somewhere inland, near a trout stream, grow my own cucumbers, keep my own pigs, and perhaps go in for roses or hollyhocks, or some such tomfoolery. Come and see me, and you shall always have a leg of mutton and a good bottle of claret. And you shall see a wife kept in thorough order. And we will send over to the Piebald Dragon for long clay pipes and tobacco.

MR. JAMES JOHNSON. I will attend the venue.

REV. WILLIAM JOHNSON. I'll come. If I don't why (*recollects himself, and coughs violently*).

MR. JAMES JOHNSON. Well, we are three failures. I don't want to be irreverent, dear brother William, but there's luck, you old Pilot, in odd numbers, and when three failures meet the result is likely to be a success.

REV. WILLIAM JOHNSON. (*lighting a long clay at the candle*). Your sentiments are sensible, although a trifle profane. I wish I could burn all churchwardens as easily and pleasantly as I light this one. But, alas! the terrible spread of modern heresies has left us no short and ready way of dealing with recalcitrants.

MR. JAMES JOHNSON. Or with solicitors who won't pay their fees.

COLONEL JOHNSON (*savagely*). Or with the young prigs who join now-a-days, and can neither ride straight, nor run fair, nor look you in the face, nor take their whack after mess, and who think themselves Napoleons because they have passed a competitive examination. Fellows who have an harmonium in their quarters, and drink tea at five o'clock, and—(*here the Colonel becomes incoherent*) and bring the service to the devil, sir, all round. (*Snorts for breath.*)

REV. WILLIAM JOHNSON. Send them to me, and let me point out to them the error of their ways.

MR. JAMES JOHNSON. And let me do something or other—well (begging your pardon, my dear brother), pass sentence upon them afterwards. What did the learned Recorder of Mudborough say? "Prisoner, God, in His infinite goodness, has given you health and strength, instead of which you go about stealing ducks."

COLONEL JOHNSON. And so they would, if they had the chance. It's all owing to the infernal Radicals. Come round to the Junior, and let's finish the evening. Don't look grumpy, Parson: Windmill Street has been shut for years.

"VESTIGIA, NULLA RETRORSUM."

From Mrs. Shadyside, Grand Hotel, Paris, to Lady Sparkler, Post Office, Pumpton Spa, Loamshire, England.

January 20, 1886.

MY DEAREST FAUSTINE.—I write to you more in sorrow than in anger, because I am sure that your *extraordinary* behaviour is less owing to any *deliberate intention* of hurting my feelings than to the presence of that ("loose screw") which I have *often told you* existed in your pretty little golden noddle.

In your last letter to me you said you had enjoyed your six weeks at Monte Carlo quite too much, and that your little card parties after the "rooms" were closed had been singularly successful. Moreover, you told me that you were bound for Paris, *where you would await me*, and that you and I could secure the *appartement*, Avenue Marigny, or something like it, and work the same little game that was *so profitable* last season.

Lastly, you said that Prince Pouschkine was *desolé*

at your departure, and he was certain to follow you to Paris before long.

Now *I* am here. Pouschkine is here. But where, oh where, are you? I find that "Ladi Sparrr-klerrr did descend 'ere, and 'ave refer all communications to Poste Restante, Pumpton Spa."

Where and what is Pumpton Spa? and what on earth are *you* doing there, of all people in the world?

Answer these questions *by return of post*, and for Heaven's sake come back as soon as possible to

Yours distractedly and devotedly,

LAURA SHADYSIDE.

From Mrs. Milford, Laburnum Lodge, Church Road, Pumpton Spa, to Mrs. Shadyside, Grand Hotel, Paris.

February 1, 1886.

DARLING LAURA,—First and foremost, to explain why I gave my address here at the Post Office—simply because I am no longer "Lady Sparkler." I left her on the road, somewhere, I suppose. In plain language, I am passing by my maiden name, and have dropped my baptismal name (which certainly can hardly be called *Christian*); and therefore am now "Mrs. Frances Milford, widow of the Rev. John Milford." The Rev. John was my brother, but he died many years ago, so that don't

matter. Now, for goodness' sake, don't make a mistake. From henceforth, *Mrs. Milford* to you and everybody else.

Secondly, to explain why I've not kept my promise to you—why I am here. And that is a much more difficult task, because, when you know the reason, I'm sure you will laugh yourself into fits, and you know how I *hate* being laughed at.

I'd better take the plunge at once. I am utterly sick of my past life. Although, as I said, I was *en vcine* at Monte Carlo, and had every prospect of most satisfactorily fleecing that stupid idiot, old Pouschkine, I don't know what came over me. I took the whole business *en grippe*. An indescribable longing came over me to drop the mask once and for all—to find rest—to retire to some place where I could live respectably and respected.

Besides (now you *will* laugh) at Marseilles, a middle-aged couple, with two handsome boys and a lovely little girl, got into my carriage. At first I was naturally disgusted; but before long they were so friendly to me, that I took a strange liking to them, and they were so loving to each other that I *envied* them—yes, envied them like I never envied man or woman before. And that's saying a good deal! I could not help thinking to myself: "When *I* am middle-aged shall I be happy as are these very ordinary people? I have forfeited my right to a happy home. What man worth having

would marry the *divorcée* in such a divorce case as mine was? And in a few years my age will have lost me even the admiration which was the breath of my life, and will frighten away the dupes who once left their money on my card tables." Well, darling, to cut it short, I determined to go in for respectability. So I had my golden locks dyed a delicate brown, invested in a full widow's outfit, and came down here, as the most reputable place I could think of. I have taken a furnished cottage close by a church of the "lowest type," have been called upon by the vicar, who has enrolled me already on the list of his "workers," and I expect to live in the odour of sanctity, on the allowance poor Sir Henry has to make me. So no more for some time from

Your reformed friend,

F. S.

(Frances Milford.)

P.S.—I forgot to say that I have made the acquaintance of old Lady Throwstone. We met in the Pump Room, and I accepted a tract from her with much gratitude. It was called "High-heeled Shoes for Dwarfs in Faith." She has taken quite a fancy to me, and now we go out tract distributing together. A good beginning, isn't it?

From Mrs. Milford, The Deanery, Canonbridge, Marleshire, to Mrs. Shadyside, Grand Hotel, Paris.

March 1, 1886.

DEAREST,—You will be surprised to see a fresh address, but, alas! I've left Pumpton Spa, or rather I've *had* to leave it. We had organized a Grand Temperance Festival in the Town Hall. We charitable ladies had arranged to act as waitresses. Old Lady Throwstone's son, Lord Badstock, the Revival preacher, and his wife, came down from London for the occasion. The feast was prepared when Lord and Lady Badstock appeared. Of course, the old Countess introduced Mrs. Milford as her co-worker, her right hand, *que sais-je?* Who do you think Lady Badstock turned out to be? Why, Miss Jawley, daughter of the M.P. who used to come to us in Park Lane when Sir Henry gave his political parties! "I think I used to meet this *lady*," said Lady Badstock, "before she was divorced from *poor* Sir Henry Sparkler!"

[Tableau.—*Et il m'a fallu plier baggage.*

But I am not to be beaten. I made friends with the daughter of the Dean of Canonbridge at the hotel in London when I arrived from Paris, so I fully determined to see what I could do on the strength of it. Need I say that before I had been two hours in Canon-

bridge I was lunching at the Deanery, and on my stating my intention of looking out for a "little home near the Cathedral," had received an invitation to stay with the sweet girl until I could get settled. As you know, I am wonderfully successful with old men, and the Dean likes me very much, I fancy. Also my Church views, which are now strictly orthodox and cathedrally; also my voice, which has won me an invitation to sing "Angels ever bright and fair," at the approaching diocesan charities concert.

Yours triumphantly,

F. S.

(Frances Milford.)

P.S.—I think I'm pretty safe. Canonbridge is *only* three hundred and fifty miles from Pumpton Spa!

From Mrs. Milford, 7 Marine Parade, Dullton-on-Sea, to Mrs. Shadyside, 281 Avenue Marigny, Champs Elysées, Paris.

April 1, 1886.

MY SWEET LAURA,—*La femme propose, le Diable dispose!* Another change of address! *Such* is scandal!

The Dean gave a grand luncheon before the concert I mentioned in my last. While we were waiting for the latest arrivals, he introduced the Bishop's daughter to me, with whom I need scarcely say I speedily made

friends. She had only just confided to me the fact that she was engaged to *such* a nice man, when the door opened, and she whispered: "there he is!" Of course he made for her as soon as he could, and *who* do you think it was? *Sir Henry Sparkler!!!*

He dragged her away from me, denounced me to the Dean; I fainted—succession of tableaux!

But *I will not be beaten.* I left an address in London, where I stayed for a week to plan out a fresh campaign. Finally, I decided upon this place, which is aristocratically and ritualistically minded.

In another week my liberal donations and distinct vocation had decided the Vicar of St. Ethelfreda's to enrol me among the sisterhood attached to his church. In that capacity I have already made many useful friends, notably the Viscountess Reredos.

It may interest you to hear that I look very nice in my nun's costume, and *utterly unrecognisable.*

Yours very angularly,

F. S.

(Sister Frances.)

P.S.—Lady Reredos has just called to ask me to hold a stall with her at the Bazaar on the 6th. Illuminations, Catholic literature, and ornaments.

P.P.S.—Thanks for your note just forwarded to me from town. It's no use whatever tempting me to join you in the Avenue Marigny. I'm settled *at last.*

Telegram from Lady Sparkler, Dullton-on-Sea, to Mrs. Shadyside, Paris.

April 6, 1886, 6 P.M.

Will be with you to-morrow night. Count Lansquenet recognized the nun at Bazaar. Lady Reredos in convulsions. General cut. Have supper ready. Invite Pouschkine. *Vogue la galère.*

THE CLERICAL ELEMENT.

From Miss Goldfield, 32 Hautton Square, S.W., to the Rev. Charles Jones, St. Æsthætala's, Clergy House, Manchester.

May 3, 1885.

DEAR FATHER EUPHEMISTUS,—You were good enough to tell me, when I last unburdened my soul to you, that even from the vortex of giddy fashion I might appeal to you in any difficult or delicate case of conscience.

Oh! how thankful we poor weak women ought to be for the revival of the celibate priesthood in the Church of England! How could I go to Mr. Grafton, at Goldfield Court, or to the Hon. and Rev. Granville Badminton, our vicar here, with the tale of my troubles, without feeling, *knowing* that it would *that very night* be poured into the too-willing ears of their horrid *wives?* Never!

I have this morning received an offer of marriage—a most advantageous one, as far as I can see. It is from Lord Tertullian, an Irish Peer, but an M.P. He is already Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,

although only forty. His appearance is agreeable, and his income ample. With my fortune (and me) to help him on, he could reach any position, I am sure. I am much inclined towards him, but I will abide by *your* decision. Always, dear Father Euphemistus,

Your faithful daughter,

ANNIE GOLDFIELD.

P.S.—I have had another letter from my cousin, Bob Crasher, the barrister. He assures me that my continued refusal to see him will drive him into evil courses. Poor fellow! So handsome, too. If he only had religion, I might——But I will remember your advice.

From the Rev. Charles Jones, St. Æsthetala's, to Miss Goldfield, London.

May 4, 1885.

MY DEAR DAUGHTER,—My sacred duties are just now pressing so heavily upon me that I must condense my answer to your very important letter into a line or two. I could not sanction your union with Lord Tertullian (advantageous though it may seem) consistently with my duty towards you and your *Eternal Interests.*

The engrossing nature of political life, and the additional load of worldly cares which it would involve, would incapacitate you from devoting yourself (as *even*

a married woman should) to the furtherance of the Cause in this benighted country.

Besides, he is *far too old* to prove a helpmeet for you, only twenty-two as you are, and possessed of unusual feminine attractions.

Think no more of him, dear child.

Yours (in religion) affectionately,

EUPHEMISTUS, O.S.X.

P.S.—The Oratory at Goldfield Court is approaching completion.

P.P.S.—Your cousin is a snare of the Devil.

From Miss Goldfield, London, to the Rev. Charles Jones, St. Æsthætala's.

June 2, 1885.

DEAR FATHER EUPHEMISTUS,—Again I have to consult you upon my settlement in life. Captain de Bar, of the 5th (Queen's Musketeers) Dragoons, whose father's estate is only seven miles from Goldfield Court, has asked me to marry him. He is *very* good-looking, and the uniform is quite too exquisitely lovely. I think I should be happy with him. What do you advise?

I am sorry to say that I could not attend the High Celebration on the Feast of St. Æsthætala, as my aunt *insisted* upon my accompanying her to the First Meet of the Four-in-Hand Club.

I was right, was I not, dear Father, to deny myself and obey my aunt?

Your faithful daughter,

ANNIE GOLDFIELD.

P.S.—Do let me speak (if only a word) to poor Bobby, dear Director. I saw him in the Park this morning; and he looked *so* white and wretched.

From the Rev. Charles Jones, St. Æsthœtala's, to Miss Goldfield, London.

June 3, 1885.

MY DEAR CHILD,—Immersed as I am in my sacred duties, I seize my pen to express my strong disapproval of Captain de Bar's candidature. A dragoon united to a faithful daughter of Holy Church? Monstrous alliance! You must dismiss him from your thoughts, my daughter; and await the time when a more fitting mate shall present himself.

As to your cousin, I cannot, so long as I have the charge of your conscience, consent to your holding the slightest communication with him. He has forfeited all claim to your esteem by his wicked threat of plunging into "evil courses." Alas! no doubt he is already wallowing deep in the mire!

Yours (in religion) very affectionately,

EUPHEMISTUS, O.S.X.

P.S.—Your Oratory is now complete. Yesterday I consecrated it with the utmost pomp. It should have been done by a Bishop, I know; but some day I *feel* that I shall be called to the Episcopate, and my functions will, of course, act retrospectively.

P.P.S.—Ah, my daughter, you should have been *here* on the Feast of St. Æsthætala! We used incense *for the first time* (the best), and the High Altar was one *blaze* of wax candles!

From Miss Goldfield, Yacht "Cygnet," Cowes, to the Rev. Charles Jones, St. Æsthætala's.

August 10, 1885.

One line in haste, dear father, as we are just sending off our mail-bag, to tell you that Lieutenant Ray, R.N., has made me an offer. He is only twenty-eight, is deliciously good-looking, is ready to give up the Navy, and has lately come into £100,000 under his uncle's will.

Should I not be acting wisely to accept him?

Your faithful daughter,

ANNIE GOLDFIELD.

P.S.—I have to confess that I broke your rule about Bobby to-day; but I am sure you will forgive me when I tell you that I met him on Ryde Pier this morning, being wheeled about in a Bath-chair, and looking dread-

fully ill. All that passed was this. I said: "I am more than sorry to see you looking so ill." And he said: "Thank you, Annie dear. I love you. Go on, Jacob!" And he left me there.

From the Rev. Charles Jones, Æsthætala's, to Miss Goldfield, Cowes.

August 11, 1885.

MY DEAREST DAUGHTER,—Although my sacred duties are now more than usually onerous, I write to say that a marriage with one who, as a sailor, has passed the best years of his life in treading the paths of debauchery and reckless adventure, is wholly out of the question for you. Think no more of Lieutenant Ray, dear daughter.

Your conversation with your cousin Robert was a distinct infraction of the rule I have laid down for you. It must not occur again. Do not believe in the illness which tempted you to address this adventurer. It was put on to excite your pity. It is not *you* this man loves, but your money.

I positively forbid you to speak to him again.

Yours (in religion) most affectionately,

EUPHEMISTUS, O.S.X.

P.S.—The account for your Oratory comes to £739 0s. 7½*d.*, and the improvements it has been your

privilege to undertake at St. Asthætala's come to £1093 17*s.* 2*d.*, so that (including your subscription of £100 towards the working expenses) the total amounts to £1932 17*s.* 9½*d.* So you may send me a cheque for that sum.

Telegram from Rev. Charles Jones, Manchester, to Miss Goldfield, Cowes.

August 15, 1885.

Cheque duly received and cashed. It is not only we who thank you, but the whole Church.

From Miss Goldfield, Pier Hotel, Ryde, to the Rev. Charles Jones, St. Æsthætala's.

August 23, 1885.

DEAR MR. JONES,—I have received your letter of the 21st, informing me that you are willing to break your rule of celibacy in my favour.

You assert that your sole object is "to save me from the advances of unsuitable admirers, as well as from the designs of low adventurers, and to retain me under the influence of Holy Church."

You may set your mind at rest about "the unsuitable admirers." They were very nice, but I have sent them all to the right about.

As for "the low adventurer," I happen to be sitting by his bedside with his mother, and I am going to marry him as soon as he is well again. That will be, I fondly hope, in about a month. Under these circumstances, however desirable it may seem to keep a private chaplain at Goldfield Court, and to go to confession to one's husband, I am under the necessity of regretfully declining your flattering offer.

I remain,

Faithfully yours,

ANNIE GOLDFIELD.

P.S.—Bobby wishes me to say that, after a careful and impartial consideration of your letters to me, he has come to the conclusion that you are the most disinterested man he ever heard of.

"KILLING NO MURDER."

A REVISED VERSION.

From Hercules Snooks, Esq., 31bis Avenue des Champs Elysées, Paris, to John Robinson, Esq., 10 Plowden Buildings, Temple, London.

January 28, 1885.

DEAR OLD MAN,—You ask me in your last letter why I have not written to you since you left us to resume your legal avocations; and you suggest that I have probably got tired of the placid amenities of boarding-house existence to which you introduced me, and which we found so pleasant in each other's company, and that I am now "wallowing in a vortex of gilded depravity." My friend, you ought to know by this time that I have sown my wild oats; that my "wallowing" days are over; that (though I am still quite young, thanks be!) my ambition and my tastes lie in the direction of a happy English home, where, in the shade of my own vine and fig-tree, I could cherish a wife of my bosom, and, by a judicious course of hospitality and a consistent advocacy of the principles

of the British Constitution, I might pave the way to a successful candidature for the House of Commons.

No, my friend; things are not what they seem. Your Hercules, though despondent, is immaculate; and when you have heard my sad case you will give me your sympathy, not your blame. In a word, I am in love; and I have been cruelly treated by the object of my affections.

The very day after you left, she flashed upon my admiring gaze as I took my accustomed place at our table d'hôte.

She was a widow, hardly thirty, I should think. You know I have never entertained the popular and insane prejudice against widows which I hear so constantly expressed. There is a comfortableness in intercourse with a pretty widow which I find lacking in the spinster. They may be looking out for a second mate; but they are not sighing for heroes of romance; they are seeking a sensible, gentlemanlike man of suitable age and position. I am just the man they like to deal with.

My income of £4000 a year places me above any suspicion of being actuated by mercenary motives; my varied experience of the world, robust health, and genial temperament render me (I can say it without vanity) a desirable companion.

Well, this lady has golden hair, a child's face,

innocent blue eye, and a fine figure of her own. She wears, habitually, many diamonds. I was much struck.

"Miss Johnson," I could not help remarking to our worthy hostess, in a whisper, "what a very charming woman! What an acquisition to our circle!"

"Ah, Mr. Snooks!" she replied, licking her lips as though she relished the flavour of so much outward and visible wealth, "you are right there. She is immensely wealthy. Who is she? Why, Mrs. Pudvine, widow of Pudvine and Co., the largest firm of flax spinners in Leeds. And that means millions!"

I do not say for a moment that this information did not somewhat strengthen the attraction which the lovely creature already possessed for me. But I was already in love—in love at first sight.

For three happy weeks I enjoyed the privilege of escorting Mrs. Pudvine almost wherever she went. She was, as it were, *my* Mrs. Pudvine! Arabella—it was a blissful time! She liked going about Paris, quite regardless of expense, which proved to me how fully accustomed she was to a life of regal magnificence; boxes at the theatres, drags to Chantilly, flowers of the costliest nature. But, naturally enough, I was not going to allow her to share the expense, as she generously offered to do. I loved her!

One evening I sat down next her, as usual, at the table d'hôte, fully determined to risk a proposal that very night. Opposite me, I noticed, for the first time, a man of remarkable appearance—a military-looking foreigner, not much under fifty: coal-black hair and moustache, both voluminous; fierce black eyes, clean cut features, an air of conscious superiority. He, too, wore many diamonds. But he also wore a multi-coloured rosette in his button-hole, which scored many points in his favour; for any moneyed snob can purchase jewels, but honorific distinctions are not for the vulgar herd.

He immediately engaged Mrs. Pudvine in conversation, and continued his success in the drawing-room after dinner. I cannot disguise the fact—he completely cut me out, and on my own ground too.

Then I went up to Miss Johnson, and asked her who this obnoxious personage might be.

"Ah, Mr. Snooks!" she replied, again licking her thin lips as when she described Mrs. Pudvine; "Quite an acquisition, I assure you! He is the Marquis de la Bafouade. He invested his money ten years ago in a large estate in Brazil; and he was fortunate enough to discover a diamond mine there. And *that* means millions!"

I need say no more. You will already have guessed the sequel. How the Marquis at once appropriated

my widow (I almost wish she *were* "my widow," and I in my silent tomb); how she allowed herself to be torn from my company, and to be entertained by my rival at a big dinner at the Continental; how he is spending his money upon her even more lavishly than I should care to do!

As soon as I get the chance of speaking to her in private I shall propose. If she accepts me (no doubt she is only flirting with the Marquis to bring *me* to the point), I shall be the happiest of men! If not, you may expect me in London by the next mail.

Your distracted Friend,

HERCULES SNOOKS.

I must say for *him* that he spends his money like water. Champagne all round again last night. We sat down twenty-seven to dinner!

Telegram from H. Snooks, Paris, to J. Robinson, London.

January 23, 1885, 4.50 P.M.

Have just had interview with A. P. Have received considerate but decided refusal. Shall leave for London by to-night's mail. Please call round at Langham Hotel to-morrow between nine and ten. Wish to confer with you as to selling estates and settling in Central Africa. Cannot trust myself in Europe until I feel less irritation against impertinent foreigner.

From the Marquis de la Bafouade, 31bis Avenue des Champs Elysécs, to Mrs. Pudvine, do. do.

January 24, 1885.

MADAME,—If I had consulted my heart, I should not have committed the avowal of my sentiments with regard to you to the unsympathetic medium of pen, ink, and paper. But there are certain matters upon which it is necessary you should clearly understand my intentions, and which the delicacy of my nature prefers to commit to writing. In any conversation between us there should be nothing to be discussed but a love as pure as passionate.

Madame, I love you. That you know already, I am very sure. But I have the honour hereby to approach your fair feet with the object of formally offering you my rank, my wealth, my hand, and my heart.

Your position places you naturally above being tempted by such a consideration; but it is my intention, if you accept my offer, to settle upon you absolutely and unreservedly all I possess, as well in the Brazils as elsewhere.

From you I expect nothing; I even hope for nothing —except your love.

Deign, Madame, to accept the assurance of my devotion the most perfect.

MARQUIS DE LA BAFOUADE.

From Mrs. Pudvine to the Marquis de la Bafouade.

January 25, 1885.

MY DEAR MARQUIS,—The letter which you handed me last night as I was retiring to rest does equal honour to your head and your heart.

I shall be happy (nay, proud) to entrust my young life to the charge of such a man as yourself.

What you propose as to settlements is generosity itself! Although I may not come to you with *quite* so much wealth as *you* have at command, you will find that I am a good manager, and that I shall take care to prove to your friends that you have married a woman who is not unsuited to the rank you have offered her.

I shall be in thé *salon* at twelve o'clock. Until then, believe me to be,

Yours always,

BELLA.

Extract from "Galignani's Messenger," February 25, 1885.

Yesterday morning the Marquis de la Bafouade led to the hymeneal altar Arabella, widow of the late Thomas Pudvine, of Leeds, England. The wedding took place at the English Church, Rue Marbœuf; and though, at the lady's express desire, it was a very quiet

one, the bride's costume, diamonds, and remarkable beauty were the cynosure of every eye that was privileged to witness the interesting ceremony. It is rumoured that this was not only the alliance of two hearts, but also of two colossal fortunes; and that the charming Marquise intends, next season, to show our *grand pschutt* how royally she can keep open house *même en pleine République.* After the *déjeuner de rigueur* at the Continental, the happy couple started for the Isle of Wight, where they purpose spending the honeymoon prior to returning to London for the season.

From the Marquis de la Bafouade, General Post Office, St. Martin's-le-Grand, to the Marquise de Bafouade, Ambassador's Hotel, S.W.

May 2, 1885.

MADAME LA MARQUISE,—Knowing what you do about yourself, you will not be surprised to hear that, when I left the hotel and you this morning, I left both without the remotest intention of returning to either.

Until last Friday, I fully believed that you were what you represented yourself to be—a millionaire. Under that impression I married you; and under that impression I have spent upon your worthless person £1300 of my hardly-earned gains at écarté. You

were more clever; you kept all your ready money in your pocket.

But when, after putting off so persistently my tender inquiries about your fortune, you positively refused to allow me to accompany you to your "solicitor's" last Friday, and, upon my insisting, "preferred" not to go at all, I began to smell a rat.

Naturally enough, I employed a detective.

Result—that there are two Mrs. Pudvines of Leeds now living, once widows. One was the wife of a publican in Briggate, and is now *my* wife—that's *you*. The other was the wife of a millionaire, and is now the Viscountess Rattler—*c'est une autre affaire!*

Well, I made a mistake. Having won £2000 hard cash one night, I determined to turn respectable, and invest it in hooking a big matrimonial fish. And for once I overreached myself.

One comfort is, that you will have to pay the hotel bill, which I believe is *rather* heavy. Another is, that I found you out in time, and have still a hundred or two left to start again with.

The heavy trunks that belong to me will sell for something; they are good solid leather. So also will the flour-bags with which they are filled. So you can't say that I left you entirely without resources.

Of course, I took the precaution to remove my own personal effects *petit à petit*. You remember how often

my poor "tailor" had to call last week with my "new uniforms," which *never* were "quite a fit!"

Receive my blessing, and believe me to be,

Your unfortunate husband,

MARQUIS DE LA BAFOUADE.

P.S.—Recollect that if *I* have swindled *you*, *you* have swindled *me*. Besides, if you do put the police on my track, I defy them to recognise me as I am dressed now. My own mother wouldn't know me!

From the Marquise de la Bafouade, Ambassador's Hotel, S.W., to Hercules Snooks, Esq., Snooks Hall, Abingdon, Oxon.

May 2, 1885.

MY DEAREST MR. SNOOKS,—I write to you *in despair*. My husband (the supposed millionaire) has turned out to be not only an adventurer, but *a common swindler*.

After making me pay for *everything* we have had until the present day—after losing *the whole* of my *large fortune* at the *gambling* table—he has *fled the country*. He has left me here *without a penny*. Our bill here is very nearly *one hundred and fifty pounds*.

You loved me once. Need I say more? Pray, *pray* come up *by the next train* to rescue me from this *fearful* position. Delay would be *fatal*. If you are here to-

morrow *all* may yet be well. If not—the exposure will *kill*

Your weeping,

ARABELLA.

P.S.—Fool that I was to entrust my *all* to him, on the faith of his "Brazilian estates!" *Fool*; FOOL that I was, to reject the love of the best, the dearest, the most *respectable* of men, *however* tempting might have been the prospect of *converting the poor heathen negroes in Brazil!*

From Hercules Snooks, Esq., to the Marquise de la Bafouade.

May 3, 1885.

MY DEAR MARQUISE,—Your letter just received has shocked me beyond the power of words to express. In order to relieve your present trouble, and to enable you to tide over until your friends can take you in, I forward a draft (uncrossed) for £500 by the hands of a trusty servant.

To do this, I shall have to give up many luxuries; for, although I am *pretty well off*, I have, alas! no estates in Brazil to fall back upon. But I act as my heart (which *bleeds* for you) dictates.

I must, however, abstain from coming to see you. My principles are (thank Heaven!) stronger than my

inclination. I must refrain from exposing myself to your *fatal* fascinations, *as long as you are the wedded wife of another!*

Yours in sorrow, but always truly,

HERCULES SNOOKS.

From Miss Priscilla Howler, Marah Lodge, Leamington, to the Prince Dullah Baffoo Ahd, Temperance Hotel, John Street, Leamington.

January 10, 1886.

DEAR PRINCE AND FELLOW-WORKER,—For three days and three nights I have prayerfully considered your proposal of a matrimonial union between us. I have, moreover, weighed, from a more worldly point of view, the arguments for and against such a step.

The disadvantages are obvious. I am a good deal older than you; your complexion is (to say the least) swarthy, and, according to your own confession, you are not blessed with a fixed income.

But your fervid eloquence in pleading the cause of the Abyssinian mission for the conversion of the benighted heathen of the Soudan; the testimony in your behalf of the ministers of my denomination; our common Christianity; and your royal rank; all are in your favour. I yearn to be labouring in the Soudan. The £100,000 I possess does much in England; what would it not accomplish in the Soudan?

Therefore, as I could not carry out my missionary vocation, except as your wife, I consent to marry you, and to entrust to your care my happiness and my fortune.

Your attached Friend,

PRISCILLA HOWLER.

From the Marquis de la Bafouade, 1091 Pentonville Road, E.C., to the Marquise de la Bafouade, 31 Crux Road, Bayswater, W.

January 11, 1886.

MY DEAREST WIFE,—Ever since I left you I have been wretched. Misfortunes have crowded upon me. I have suffered agonies of remorse. My life is a burden to me.

I hear you are very poor. No doubt the preceding paragraph applies equally to you.

If, then, your life is a burden to *you*, as it is to *me* (I mean, of course, as *mine* is to me), join me here to-morrow. This is my plan.

I have purchased a bottle of laudanum. On your side, do you the same.

We will dine together, comfortably, and for the last time, in my little room. Then comfortably, and for the last time, we will retire to the conjugal couch.

And then, we will mutually forgive each other all our sins, drink off our respective bottles of laudanum, and

meet a peaceful and painless death in each other's arms. Verdict:—Overdose of opiate.

If this suggestion smiles upon you, reply (if your means permit) by telegram. I will then proceed to order a succulent repast—for the last time!

I have bought an ounce-bottle to make sure. You had better do the same. *I*, at all events, would not expose *you*, dearest, to the *slightest* chance of awaking *alone* in the next world.

Your affectionate Husband,

MARQUIS DE LA BAFOUADE.

Telegram from the Marquise to the Marquis.

January 12, 1886, 9.10 A.M.

Letter just received. Proposal most sympathetic to my state of mind. Agree joyfully. Will purchase necessary immediately. With you at seven to-night.

Extract from "The Daily Telegraph," February 21, 1886.

MIDDLESEX SESSIONS, February 20.

(Before the Assistant-Judge.)

EXTRAORDINARY CASE.—Alphonse Duval (*alias* "Marquis de la Bafouade," "Prince Dullah Baffoo Ahd of

Abyssinia," &c. &c.), aged fifty-two, and Arabella Duval (*alias* "Marquise de la Bafouade"), his wife, aged thirty-seven, were indicted on a variety of counts, including obtaining money on false pretences, obtaining goods and lodging by fraud, illegally pawning, inciting to commit suicide, &c. It appeared that in the early days of last month, each of the prisoners, having a chance of contracting an advantageous marriage on the death of the other, purchased a bottle of laudanum with the ostensible object of seeking death in the other's arms. Each, however, had largely diluted the opiate with coloured water; so that, when they woke from a deep sleep, they found that they had mutually intended to murder each other. A terrible scene followed, in consequence of which the female prisoner gave her husband in charge. Before the magistrate, she accused him of grievously assaulting her in order to obtain possession of a letter in which he incited her to commit suicide. He had succeeded in destroying the letter; but the magistrate remanded him for inquiries. The publicity attached to this case brought up a host of witnesses from all parts of the country as to the fraudulent career of both parties; and the result was that the magistrate caused the wife to be arrested, and fully committed both for trial. The jury yesterday found both prisoners guilty. His lordship, after commenting severely upon the infamous conduct of these clever swindlers, said that,

although they had not been previously convicted in this country, in view of the murderous intent of the incitement to suicide he found it impossible to pass upon them a less severe sentence than that of five years' penal servitude, to be followed by three years' police supervision.

"A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS."

From Richard Morrison, 3 Essex Court, Temple, to Percy Montmorency Gosling, Esq., 10H *The Albany, W.*

March 5, 1885.

MY DEAR GOSLING,—As it is now nearly three months since you attained your majority, and consequently assumed control of your fortune, I write to ask you if it would be convenient to you now to repay the £468 which I advanced to you at various times during the two years we spent together abroad.

When your uncle came to my chambers in January, 1881, and offered me £600 a year and my expenses to take charge of a ward in Chancery on his "Grand Tour" the prospect seemed very tempting. To a struggling barrister £600 a year seems an inexhaustible mine of wealth.

I now regret that I undertook the task, for I find it difficult to fall back into the old sedentary life after so brilliant an episode of foreign travel; but I spent a very pleasant time abroad with you, and I trust

that you, on your side, can look back to our connection with satisfaction.

I shall be very glad if you can let me have the money soon, as I should then be able to join my brother (the engineer) in a very profitable undertaking.

Believe me always,

Very sincerely yours,

RICHARD MORRISON.

P.S.—Recollect that you never gave me I.O.U.'s for the advances, so this is strictly a debt of honour.

From P. M. Gosling, Esq., to Richard Morrison, Esq.

March 17, 1885.

DEAR OLD MAN,—Have just got back from Paris, and found your letter. I daresay your account is all right, but I have nothing to do with any back debts, you know, old chappie. You had better write to Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego, the solicitors to my trustees, and they will put it all right. I hope you are all right and jolly. I had great fun over in Paris. They made me an honorary member of the Casseeou Club. We had great fun there almost every night. I won two thou. there last Friday. Why don't you try your luck at baccarat? It's no end of a good game. As to my paying that £468, that's a good 'un. That goes down in the bill. Happy thought! Stick it down £500

The trustees won't be any the wiser. I am just off to Brighton, so no more from

Yours, all there,

PERCY MONTMORENCY GOSLING.

What do *you* think? They have just made me a Deputy-Lieutenant for the county. I shall go to the next Levee in the uniform, which is very handsome.

From Messrs. Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego, Solicitors, 17c Lincoln's Inn Fields, to Richard Morrison, Esq.

March 27, 1885.

DEAR SIR,—We have submitted your communication of the 18th inst. to the Trustees *in re* Gosling, and we are instructed to inform you that they absolutely decline to entertain your claim for £468 upon the estate.

Firstly—According to your own statement, you have no acknowledgment whatever of the various alleged loans which have culminated in so serious a liability.

Secondly—Even if you possessed such acknowledgments the trustees would not, under the circumstances, feel disposed to overlook the fact that these loans were made to a minor. The infant was in receipt of an ample income, and any such loans must have been made for purposes which, doubtless, you would not care to have known.

The trustees are surprised that you, as a barrister, should have made such an application.

We are, Sir, yours faithfully,
SHADRACH, MESHACH, & ABEDNEGO.

From Richard Morrison, Esq., to P. M. Gosling, Esq.

March 28, 1885.

MY DEAR GOSLING,—I enclose the insulting reply that I have received from your solicitors to my application for the £468 you owe me.

You will recollect that, on each occasion when I advanced you money, it was, as you said, with tears in your eyes, "to save your honour," and on your solemn promise that you would give up your fatal tendency to gambling and other ruinous dissipation. Each time I lent you the money against my better judgment, and after much hesitation.

But I did it for your sake. Will you now, for your own sake, pay back the money which was lent to "save your honour?"

Yours, very sincerely,
RICHARD MORRISON.

P.S.—If you are temporarily pressed I am quite prepared to take it by instalments.

From the Same to the Same.

June 28, 1885.

DEAR SIR,—This is the seventh time I write to ask you to pay the debt of honour you owe me. Let me know, by return of post, whether you intend to settle up or not. "Yes" or "No" will be a sufficient answer.

Yours faithfully,

RICHARD MORRISON.

Post-card from P. M. Gosling, Esq., to R. Morrison, Esq.

June 29, 1885.

I am surprised that you should continue to dun me for that coin, when I have referred you to the solicitors of my trustees. You know quite as well as I do that I am not responsible for the settlement of my estate during my minority. And, if I was, I have now a great many claims on my purse. Besides, I don't know how on earth you have run it up to nearly £5co. If there was not something fishy about it, the trustees would have paid up like a shot.

PERCY MONTMORENCY GOSLING.

Post-card from R. Morrison Esq., to P. M. Gosling, Esq.

June 30, 1885.

SIR,—You need not fear that I shall ever again condescend to hold any communication with you. I

have, until now, been accustomed to deal with gentlemen. You, sir, are an unmitigated young *cad*, and you have swindled me out of £468.

RICHARD MORRISON.

Extract from the "Daily Thunderer," March 10, 1886.

QUEEN'S BENCH DIVISION.

Before Mr. JUSTICE WIGGINGTON and a Special Jury.

GOSLING *v.* MORRISON.

This protracted case was brought to a conclusion this morning. It was an action for libel brought by Mr. Percy Montmorency Gosling, of Gander Hall, Loamshire, against Mr. Richard Morrison, of The Temple, Barrister-at-Law. Mr. Morrison, who had travelled abroad for two years in charge of Mr. Gosling, then a Ward in Chancery, advanced him sums of money, from time to time, to the total amount of £468. Upon payment being refused on the plea of infancy, and that the money had been advanced for improper purposes, Mr. Morrison addressed a post-card to the plaintiff containing the alleged libel—*i.e.*, that Mr. Gosling was "an unmitigated young cad" and had "swindled" him "out of £468." Upon this Mr. Gosling brought an action for libel against the defendant, and claimed £5000 damages.

The Attorney-General, Mr. Gabbler, Q.C., and Mr.

John Doe, appeared for the plaintiff; and the Solicitor-General, Mr. Talkeigh, Q.C., and Mr. Richard Roe, appeared for the defendant.

Mr. Justice Wiggington concluded his charge to the Jury by informing them that the principle of the law of libel was, that "the greater the truth, the greater the libel;" and that, therefore, if they found that the plaintiff was indeed "an unmitigated young cad," and had indeed "swindled" the defendant "out of £468," they must, without hesitation, find for the plaintiff. The damages, of course, were a matter entirely within their province. The learned Judge then dismissed the Jury to their arduous duties.

The Jury returned into Court, after an absence of five-eighths of a minute, with a verdict for the plaintiff, damages £5000.

The learned Judge, expressing his entire concurrence with the verdict, gave judgment for the plaintiff, with £5000 damages and costs.

A UNIVERSITY CAREER.

From Mrs. Martin, Bellevue Cottage, Harrow-on-the-Hill, to Edmund Martin, Esq., St. Ebbs' College, Oxford.

October 14, 1883.

My own dear Boy,—Your interesting letter arrived this morning while we were at breakfast, and was very welcome. I read it first, of course, and then Lily read it aloud for the benefit of Polly and Frank, *and* her own.

So my Ted is really an Oxford man at last! I can hardly believe it. It seemed so impossible six months ago. Of course here, as a home-boarder, your education has been very inexpensive, but Oxford! And to think that it is your own hard work that has got you there. Is not *that* glorious?

Oh, my boy, I shall never forget the day when you won your Scholarship at St. Ebbs'! I think I almost, if not quite, cried with joy. I was proud enough of you here when you came out First of the whole School, when you got into the Cricket Eleven, when you won the Prize Poem. But I have far more cause for pride

and gratitude now that, instead of entering the Church through a Theological College, as you would have had to do, you will take Holy Orders with an Oxford degree. Perhaps you will get a Fellowship; who knows? How your poor dear father would have rejoiced at it! It was his greatest wish to send you there, and if he had lived you were to have gone to his old college, Magdalen. And now, after all the grief and struggle, you really are an Oxford man. "Mr. Martin of St. Ebbs!" How well it sounds, does it not?

But I must not rattle on like this, or you will think that "the Mater" has something wrong with her mental organisation.

I want you always, dear Ted, to write to me for *anything* you may require. You will soon find out, when you settle down, what is essential to your comfort. I daresay we have forgotten "a whole heap" of things in fitting you out; so you must *be sure* and let us know as the occasion arises.

I should deal as little as possible with the Oxford tradesmen if I were you. Your dear father always said they were a set of rogues, who not only charge double for everything, but actually supply inferior goods.

I am very glad you are comfortable in your rooms. We are already looking forward to next year, when we mean to come down to "Commem." and invade your castle in a body.

It is just post-time, so I will say no more than that we all send our best love, and hope you will write again soon.

Ever your loving Mother,

AGNES MARTIN.

From Alfred Gibbon, Esq., St. Ebbs' College, Oxford, to Edmund Martin, Esq.

October 20, 1883.

DEAR MARTIN,—As an old Harrovian, I put up your name for the Harrow Club, and got you duly seconded. I am glad to say that you have been as duly elected; so if you will come to my rooms after Hall to-night, we will go round to the Club together, and I will introduce you.

Yours truly,

A. GIBBON.

From Messrs. Tweed & Angola, Tailors and Outfitters, High Street, Oxford, to Edmund Martin, Esq.

October 21, 1883.

DEAR SIR,—We venture to solicit the favour of your patronage during your stay at Oxford.

The quality of our material, the stylishness of our cut, and the reasonableness of our charges, are such that we feel confident of giving you every satisfaction. If

you will honour us with a call we shall have much pleasure in taking your measure.

Our firm is the oldest-established, and our terms of credit the most liberal, in Oxford.

We are, dear Sir, &c. &c.

TWEED & ANGOLA.

From Jewellers, Tobacconists, Picture Dealers, Livery Stable Keepers, Dog Fanciers, Wine Merchants, Confectioners, Grocers, &c. &c., to Edmund Martin, Esq.

October 21 *to* 31, 1883.

100 odd facsimiles of Messrs. Tweed & Angola's Circular.

From Lord Dashaway, Christ Church, Oxford, to Edmund Martin, Esq.

February 2, 1884.

DEAR MARTIN,—My father told me in the Christmas Vac. that he and your father were at Magdalen together and were great pals.

I shall be very much pleased if you will come and wine with me to-morrow night about 8 P.M., so that we may rub noses. You'll find a jolly set of chappies, and a hearty welcome.

Yours, very truly,

DASHAWAY.

Extract from "The Sportsman," March 3, 1884.

AYLESBURY STEEPLECHASES.

GOLD CUP.

Lord Dashaway's br. m. "Fairy"	E. Martin	1
Mr. Tomkin's ch. g. "Prancer"	Owner	2
Sir H. Jarvis' br. g. "Wolloper"	Owner	3

From James Trumpington, Esq., of Christ Church, to Edmund Martin, Esq.

June 18, 1884.

DEAR MARTIN,—I cannot understand how it is that you do not remember it. Fortunately, I have your own I.O.U.'s to the full amount (£87), and therefore shall be obliged if you will settle up by Monday at the latest, as I have myself some debts of honour to meet on that date.

Truly yours,

J. TRUMPINGTON.

From Asher Davis, Tobacconist and Wine Merchant, Broad Street, Oxford, to Edmund Martin, Esq.

June 20, 1884.

DEAR SIR,—If you will sign the enclosed bill for £250 at three months, and return it by bearer, I will forward you my cheque for £150. The six dozen

sherry and six boxes (100) cigars shall be delivered to-night.

I am letting you have the money on very easy terms, as the Old Amontillado is dirt cheap at 84*s.*, and the Cabanas at £4 4*s.* are simply given away.

Respectfully yours,

ASHER DAVIS.

From Jewellers, Tailors, Tobacconists, Livery Stable Keepers, &c. &c. &c., to Edmund Martin, Esq.

October 21 *to* 31, 1884.

DEAR SIR,—We beg respectfully to draw your attention to our enclosed little account, and to remind you that we do not allow more than six months' credit except under special circumstances.

Trusting for a continuance of past favours.

We are, Sir, &c. &c. &c.,

"DASH, DASH, & DASH.

Extract from Honours List in Moderations, published December 2, 1884.

CLASS IV.

Jacobus Snoggins è Coll. Magd.

Edmundus Martin è Coll. Sanct. Ebb.

Telegram from Edmund Martin, Paddington Station, to the Rev. Todey Sterner, M.A., St. Ebbs' College, Oxford.

Came up this morning without leave to see dentist. Just missed last train. Will return first train to-morrow. Full explanation.

8.20 P.M., *January* 24, 1885.

From the Rev. Todey Sterner, M.A., Vice-Principal of St. Ebbs, to Mrs. Martin, Bellevue Cottage, Harrow-on-the-Hill.

February 5, 1885.

DEAR MADAM,—In answer to your letter of the 2nd inst., I am desired by the Principal to say, that it is quite impossible for him to reverse his decision (in which I may say I fully concur), and that he regrets you should have thought it advisable to have written to him at all upon the subject.

The forfeiture of your son's scholarship, and the removal of his name from the College books, are but the natural consequence of a University career of shameless debauchery.

The extravagances which in the case of an Undergraduate of good position and means might be overlooked, cannot be tolerated for an instant in the person of a Stipendiary of this College.

I am, Madam, faithfully yours,

TODEY STERNER, M.A.

From Mrs. Martin, to the Rev. Todey Sterner, M.A.

February 6, 1885.

SIR,—Your letter of yesterday's date requires an answer. It shall be brief and to the point.

I will begin with your concluding paragraph. Firstly, I fail to see why "extravagances" should be "overlooked" in *any* case. I fail to see why, just because he is at Oxford, an Undergraduate should indulge in vagaries which, in London, would certainly exclude him from society, and might possibly subject him to the attentions of the police.

With regard to the difference between an Undergraduate of position and a Stipendiary, I should not, if I were you, weigh too much upon the point.

Pray, Sir, what are *you* yourself but a Stipendiary of St. Ebbs? A Stipendiary who neglects his duty.

The colonel of a regiment (my brother was colonel of the 42nd Highlanders) is bound by no regulation to supervise the morals or expenditure of his officers, who, by the way, are men at large. But where is the colonel who, if he saw one of his subalterns indulge for a whole year in a "career of shameless debauchery," would not do his utmost, by kindly advice and remonstrance, to wean the poor fool from his evil courses? *You are paid* to look after young fellows fresh from

school and still "in statu pupillari"—Have you ever done so much as a regimental colonel? Never!

With regard to the first paragraph of your letter, far be it from me to say one word in *excuse* of my poor lost boy's vices and follies. But this I *will* say: that, until my son went to Oxford, I never had occasion to feel anything but pride at his conduct. Some natures can go through the fire of temptation unscathed. He, alas! succumbed. But who put the temptation in his way? *You*, sir! Yes, you, and your system.

You, who could abolish the fatal credit scandal. Let the University decree that no debt above £10 shall be recoverable in the Vice-Chancellor's Court, and there will very soon be an end of tailors' and jewellers' and wine-merchants' extortions.

You, who could abolish the fatal custom of giving "wines." The idea of mere boys, who at home drink a glass or two of claret after dinner with their fathers, sitting down to a wine-party that costs £20 or £30. The idea of such parties being given in rotation throughout the term! The idea of such gentlemen's sons learning to become drunkards within the sacred walls of St. Ebbs!

You, in fine, who can "gate" a man for missing Chapels and Lectures; who can fine a man for not wearing his gown in the street; but who, well knowing

that all this "shameless debauchery" is going on, shut yours eyes until the inevitable crash arrives, and then, holding up your hands in horror, expel your victims, and shut your eyes again until it is time to repeat the virtuous operation.

You, sir, have ruined my son. I am, therefore, without the *slightest* respect,

Yours,

AGNES MARTIN.

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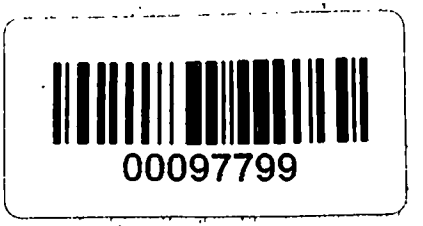
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